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ABSTRACT

This training packet is intended to guide individuals who wish to conduct staff development workshops on the topic of school coordination and classroom management. The packet is organized into sections that focus in turn on three subtopics--individualizing instruction, learning centers, and classroom climate. Each section identifies a number of important concepts and then suggests some strategies for conveying the concepts to workshop participants. (JG)

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SCHOOL COORDINATION AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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SCHOOL COORDINATION AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

This packet is designed to serve as a guide for those persons wishing to conduct a staff development workshop on the topic, "School Coordination and Classroom Management." It includes a narrative explanation of the topic, and also activities and strategies which can be utilized in a staff development session.

Since this topic is a very complex one, the packet is designed to cover only some of the major concepts contained within the topic. The following are the subtopic/sections of this packet:

Individualizing Instruction

Learning Centers

Classroom Climate

The subtopics are interrelated, but they may be dealt with separately.

This packet is not the final word on the topic, "School Coordination and Classroom Management." It contains only suggested activities to guide a person through the topic. Workshop facilitators should utilize their own backgrounds and creativity when approaching this topic in a workshop setting.

INTRODUCTION

This portion of the packet is concerned with individualization. Although individualized instruction can mean one to one instruction, this is not the only way individualization can be accomplished. The number of students per group does not determine whether or not instruction has been individualized. A teacher may work with one student on one skill but unless the teacher has determined the student's need for instruction in this particular area, it is still a hit or miss type of instruction. When instruction is individualized, it is designed to meet the needs of the individual student. Thus, individualization can occur in any size group situation as long as each student in the group needs the instruction.

In order to individualize the classroom setting a teacher should consider the following:

1. Objectives

   Do I know what it is I want my students to do?

2. Assessment

   If I know what I want the students to do, how do I know if they can do it?

3. Materials

   Now that I know what the students can or cannot do, what materials should I use to help them accomplish the objectives?

4. Grouping

   How can I group my students to meet their individual needs?

5. Space

   How can I arrange my classroom to accomodate the various groups and materials needed to meet my students' needs?

6. Time

   How do I schedule this new classroom arrangement?

7. Record Keeping

   Since all my students are not working at the same tasks, how can I keep track of them?

8. Evaluation

   How will I know if individualizing is effective?

Although the above items are listed in somewhat of a sequential order, the teacher will have to consider them simultaneously when planning.

The purpose of this packet is to provide a person wishing to conduct a workshop on this topic with some background information. It also suggests some strategies for conveying the concepts to the participants. These strategies are merely suggested so that the consultant is free to use any or all of the strategies as they are needed.

The consultant should also be aware of the fact that the participants will most probably be at different stages of individualization within their classrooms. Teachers will generally have differing techniques for grouping, scheduling, etc. Since there is no one way to individualize, the consultant should be aware of how each teacher is individualizing the classroom. At the outset of the workshop the consultant should spend some time getting to know the participants and their methods for individualizing their classroom settings.

To be effective, this workshop should be designed to meet the needs of the participants. However, since the needs of the participants will vary and cannot be foretold, this packet is written in general terms so that the consultant can adapt it to the participants.

STRATEGY: *Use* RESOURCE ONE *"Needs Assessment" to determine the needs of the participants.*

OBJECTIVES: WHAT ARE THEY AND WHY ARE THEY NEEDED?

Objectives are the desired outcomes of any situation. They are the stated goals the teacher wants the students to obtain. Oftentimes, objectives exist only in the teacher's mind. Objectives are sometimes written at the district or state level. Although both objectives which exist in a teacher's mind and those written by someone other than the teacher are legitimate objectives, it is the teacher who should specify what each student can accomplish if objectives are to be meaningful. This does not mean that a teacher cannot use an objective written by someone else, it merely means that teachers are the best judges of which objectives meet their students' needs.

When thinking about writing or using an objective the teacher should make sure the objective is measureable. That is, the objective should specifically state the conditions which must be met if the objective is to be considered accomplished. An objective should leave little doubt as to what is expected of the learner. In order to be this specific, instructional specialists generally agree that objectives should be written in terms of observable behavior or products of student behavior. The following is an example of an objective which is both observable and measureable:

> *Given a list of 10 words, the student will be able to write an antonym for at least 8 of the words.*

Note that in this objective the student will write, an observable behavior, an antonym for 8 of the 10 words, an observable product. Compare this objective with the following:

> *The student will know the relationship between words.*

This objective gives no clue as to when one would be able to determine what a student knows. It is neither specific nor measureable. If teachers are to prescribe materials and instructional techniques for their students, the teachers must know precisely what it is the students are to be able to do when they have completed the prescribed activities.

Another factor which should be considered when selecting or writing objectives is which category or domain the objective falls into. Traditionally, the domains of behavior have been set up as cognitive, affective, or psychomotor. The cognitive domain refers to knowledge or the capacity for knowledge. Most objectives currently employed in schools can be classified in the cognitive domain. The affective domain refers to the feelings, emotions, or attitudes of the learner. The affective domain is by nature not as well defined as the cognitive domain. The third domain is the psychomotor domain. This domain includes any muscular action which results from a thinking process. Typing is an example of behavior which can be classified as psychomotor.

The purpose for mentioning the domains of behavior is to alert teachers to their existence so that learning in their classroom occurs in all three domains. Many teachers will find that all their objectives are cognitive. It is hoped that an awareness of the different behavioral domains will encourage teachers to stress the affective and psychomotor domains in their instructional plans as well as the cognitive.

Why use instructional objectives? The main reason for using objectives is to pinpoint the learning which the teacher hopes will occur. Objectives help organize the curriculum and instruction which occurs in the classroom, thereby avoiding a hit and miss type of learning situation. That is, to be an efficient teacher-manager, the classroom teacher must know the individual students and what precisely they are to learn and accomplish.

STRATEGY: *Have participants write down one word which describes how they feel towards instructional objectives. Responses will probably be something like "Ugh!"*

The workshop facilitator should use these comments as a basis for discussing why they feel as they do towards instructional objectives.

If the participants' comments are positive towards instructional objectives the workshop leader may ask the participants if they use them. If they do use them the consultant might ask whether it is by choice or by force. Probably if the participants feel good about behavioral objectives it is because they see the value of using them and therefore use them because they want to.

On the other hand if the participants' comments are mostly negative, then the consultant must attempt to change this attitude before going on to tell them how to write or select them.

STRATEGY: *The following incomplete sentences could also be used to illicit the participants reaction to and knowledge of instructional objectives.*

Instructional objectives are _____

_____

I use instructional objectives to _____.

_____

The purpose(s) of instructional objectives is (are) ____

_____

STRATEGY: *Participants can be given a set of objectives and asked to check the ones which are well written.*

STRATEGY: *Let the participants write down an objective which would apply to their students. After writing the objective have the participants write down whether their objective fall into the cognitive, affective, or psychomotor domain. If most of the objectives are cognitive, this provides the consultant with the opportunity to point out that most objectives are cognitive. The participants could then be asked to write objectives which fall into the two domains they did not use on the first objective.*

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the building block of individualization. It is through assessment, both formal and informal, that a teacher finds out where a student is and then can determine what instruction is needed. The teacher assesses the students to see how they are performing in relation to the objectives. It should be noted that like the objectives, assessment should include the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

Before teachers can begin assessing students, they must know what it is they want the students to know. These are the objectives. After the objectives have been determined, the teacher may begin to assess the students' needs. Assessment can be accomplished in a number of ways. It may be formal, that is, through the use of standardized tests. *Buros Mental Measurements Yearbook* is a most comprehensive source of information on standardized tests. Besides standardized tests, there are many informal means of assessing a student's needs. Some informal assessment techniques are the informal reading inventory (IRI), checklists, cumulative record file, interviews inventories, observation, anecdotal records, samples of products.

The data obtained from assessment should be used to plan the instruction for the students. Assessment should reveal a student's strengths as well as weaknesses. Consequently, instruction should utilize the student's strengths to overcome their weaknesses. Hopefully, by zeroing in on the needs of the students, they will soon master whatever area(s) in which assessment revealed their weaknesses. The students' needs will, therefore, be changing and assessment will be an ongoing process.

Although the assessment of each student is vital to the process of individualizing learning, this packet is only mentioning it briefly to show how it fits into individualization. Another packet, also developed by the Florida Right to Read Effort, deals with the topic of diagnostic-prescriptive instruction. If at this time the workshop consultant feels that the participants need some additional background on how to assess a student's strengths and weaknesses, the "Diagnostic-Prescriptive Instruction" packet is a resource.

MATERIALS

When thinking about organizing materials to use when individualizing instruction, the teachers must know what materials they have in their own classroom as well as what materials are available to them in the school and district. The first step in determining what materials a teacher has is to inventory the materials. This process in some places has adopted the acronym of SWIM, or School Wide Inventory of Materials. A form something like the following may prove useful when conducting a SWIM:

Material	Skill taught	Readability level	Location

After conducting an inventory of available materials, the teacher should compare materials to their students' needs. For example, if a number of students appear to be having trouble with context clues, the teacher should check the SWIM to see if there are materials available which teach or reinforce context clues at the needed levels. If by chance a SWIM did not reveal materials which taught context clues, this would indicate that this type of material should be purchased or made to meet the needs of the students.

Still another thing to consider when thinking of materials is how to organize and store them. To obtain optimum use from all materials, they should be accessible to the students no matter what their age.

One way to organize materials is by the skills they teach. This may be listed either by the name of the skill or the material may be coded into the objective numbering system and listed as such. For example if a given material can be used to teach the objective on context clues, OBJ .045, the materials would also be coded OBJ .045. Or materials can just be sequentially numbered.

Materials can also be organized by readability level of the materials. Some teachers color code materials to indicate to the students what materials they can use. For example, all materials at Level One may have a yellow dot on it, all Level Two material may have a blue dot.

Another way to organize or store materials is by the type of material, for example, records, texts, games, etc. This is convenient for storage purposes, but can be confusing if there is a great deal of any one type of material.

In addition to these organizational procedures, a teacher may wish to alphabetize materials by titles, authors, or publishers.

Some teachers prefer to organize materials around learning centers. Here the space is used not only for storing materials but also to use the materials.

When deciding how to organize and store materials, a teacher can use one method or a combination of any of the above methods. The important thing to remember here is that all materials should be easily accessible to the students. This will not only make retrieval of materials easier on the teacher, it will help foster skills in responsibility and independence in the students.

Teachers should also consider whether or not materials are effective. That is, do they teach what they say they do. The best way to evaluate this is through student use. "Does it work with my students?" However, teachers and students cannot afford this type of hit or miss evaluation. Materials should be evaluated before as well as after they are purchased. To help the teacher, RESOURCE TWO has been included in the packet. This is one way of evaluating materials. It forces teachers and administration to think carefully about the materials before they buy. In all cases, teachers must keep their objectives in mind when selecting materials.

Therefore, to obtain optimum use from materials, teachers must carefully select and organize their materials. Although this process is initially time consuming, it will save much time for the students and teacher once it is implemented.

STRATEGY: *Have participants write down or sketch how they organize their materials. Results should vary so the different techniques can be shared.*

STRATEGY: *Using some type of form, give the participants time to begin an inventory of their classroom materials. They will probably only be able to list the material, but this will encourage the participants to complete the inventory when they return to their classrooms. Discuss what an inventory can be used for when it is completed.*

STRATEGY: *Give the participants some material relevant to their grade level or subject area. Use* RESOURCE TWO *to evaluate their materials. This is also a good way to make teachers aware of new materials on the market.*

STRATEGY: *For those persons who do not know how to use a readability formula on a reading passage, pair them with someone who does and have them find the readability level of the material.*

GROUPING

Before grouping students, teachers should know why they are grouping students. The principle of grouping is based on the individuality of students. Every individual is different in some way from every other individual. However, they do share common characteristics, needs, and interests. It is the things pupils have in common which are generally used as the basis for grouping. Thus, grouping students would meet their individual needs.

The first grouping decision to be made by teachers and administrators is how to group the students with the teachers. This brings up possibilities such as non-graded; self-contained; team teaching; departmentalized; open-space.

When organizing the school into groups, the administrators and teachers should first consider the needs of their student population. Another consideration is the physical plant in which the school is housed. The third consideration is how the teachers prefer to work, team teaching or self-contained.

Team teaching is one way to group teachers and students which helps stimulate individualization of instruction. In team teaching, there are two or more teachers who are given the responsibility for instructing a group of students. The number of students increases proportionately to the number of teachers. One advantage of team teaching is that it utilizes the strengths of the teachers. It also avoids duplication of effort. The responsibilities for planning, initiating, and sustaining instruction are shared among a team of teachers.

Departmentalization differs from team teaching in that each teacher teaches a subject. The students then move from teacher to teacher for instruction. In this system, a student may have as many as five to seven teacher per day. The advantage of departmentalization is that it allows the teachers to concentrate their efforts in one subject which is hopefully their area of expertise. One of the major drawbacks of departmentalization is that the teachers have so many students a day they do not have the time to do much else with the student other than teach their subject matter.

As its name implies, the non-graded programs are at the opposite end of the spectrum from the graded organizational structure. In a non-graded program, students are grouped by their achievement regardless of their chronological age. This allows the student's instructional program to be highly individualized. Learners progress at their own pace as they sequentially master well-defined objectives. The non-graded system would hardly work if the curriculum was not highly individualized. One problem with non-graded programs is that a

classroom might contain students with vast age differences if some specific guides were not used.

Another arrangement which tends to enhance individualization is flexible scheduling. Flexible scheduling breaks the day into small blocks of time of approximately 20 minutes each. These time periods can be grouped together to create longer periods. They permit the curriculum to be broken into time frames which are needed by both student and subject.

Any of the above grouping techniques could be accomplished in a traditional school plant as well as an open space plant. In both situations they would require some organizational planning to be accomplished. If a school or a group of teachers were interested in trying a different type of grouping of students, they should approach it slowly with very careful planning and patience.

It should be noted that one should not discard the traditional self contained classroom as an impossible vehicle for individualization. Within a graded self contained situation, the teacher has more than ample opportunity for individualization. One of the advantages of a self contained classroom is that a teacher has time to get to know the students better since there are not as many students per teacher.

After the teachers and administration decide what type of grouping they wish to use to get the students into their classroom, learning should be further individualized through grouping. Students can be grouped into one of the following: (a) large group (b) small group (c) independent study. The main point to remember is that groups should be flexible. They should be formed for a specific purpose and then disbanded when the purpose is accomplished.

As has been stated, there are different types of groups which can be used by the classroom teacher. One of the most common types of grouping procedure is to group students according to their ability or achievement level. The purpose of this type of grouping is to place the students at a level of difficulty where they feel comfortable with the materials but at the same time they are of sufficient difficulty that they can learn from them. This type of grouping attempts to allow students to work at their own pace. One of the unfortunate aspects of ability or achievement grouping is that there has to be a low group. Being placed in the low or even middle group can be damaging to the students' self concept. This is especially true if the groups are given names which are giveaways as to which group is the high, middle, and low group. For example, calling the high group the "Speedboats" or "Eagles" while the corresponding low groups are the "Rowboats" or "Buzzards" would definitely be damaging to students' self concept if they were placed in the low group.

Teachers should also be aware of their attitudes toward different achievement level groups. If a teacher brightens up to work with the high group and puts the low group off till last and then droops at their appearance, the students will feel it.

To avoid this, a teacher can group by need for instruction. As a need for instruction arises, the teacher can group those students together for instruction in that area. After the students have mastered the skill, the group can be disbanded. This will prevent any one student from being labelled as in the low or high group.

Students may also be grouped to practice a skill. One way to do this is Paired Activity for Learning (PAL). Two students are paired together either to practice a skill or to tutor. PAL is a good way to give students practice with oral reading without subjecting them to the round robin routine.

A group may also be formed on the basis of a hobby or interest. Activities centered around the interest or skill can be designed to teach skills needed by the group's members.

Another purpose for grouping may be for research purposes. Here the teacher must help the students clearly define what it is they want to find out. The teacher can also be most helpful in directing the students to related resource materials and checking the group's progress from time to time.

The purpose of mentioning types and varieties of groups is not to exclude whole class grouping. There are many occasions when the whole class would benefit from meeting together. Activities such as choral reading, dramatizations, etc., are excellent for participation of the whole class.

The thought of having many groups working on different activities at the same time frightens many teachers. If a teacher has never tried any type of grouping or wishes to change the grouping types or procedures from what is presently being used, the teacher will want to proceed slowly. Teachers are advised to try working with one small group on an individual basis until they and the students feel comfortable working in a more individualized situation.

STRATEGY: *To demonstrate the fact that grouping is a flexible arrangement and can change depending upon its purpose, group the participants using different bases for grouping. Some sample bases for grouping follow:*

1. *married - single*
2. *signs of the Zodiac*
3. *number of children*
4. *states or regions where born*
5. *color of eyes*
6. *level they teach*

The workshop leader could quickly get the people in and out of a few different types of groups in a short time period. The participants could also be asked to quickly brainstorm what the purpose of each group is. This activity also serves to give the opportunity to get to know each other better.

STRATEGY: *The workshop leader could also model different types of grouping throughout the workshop. Remember the groups must change to fit the needs of the participants.*

STRATEGY: *To demonstrate the results of stagnant grouping practices, the workshop leader could give the participants a brief pre-test and then group them for the rest of the session on the basis of the results of the pre-test. The pre-test should be designed so that at least half of the participants do poorly on it. However, the test should not be on a topic which would embarrass the participants who do poorly. The following are some examples of types of things that could be used as a basis for grouping:*

1. The results of a trivia test

2. Ability to putt a ball into a hole. Give the participants three chances, so they can be grouped into those who got all three balls into the hole, those who got two, etc. The participants would be divided into four groups.

3. Give the participants a list of the states and have them write down each state's capital.

These are just a few suggestions of types of activities which could be used as pre-tests for grouping the participants. The consultants are encouraged to create their own.

After the participants have taken the pre-test, group them according to the results of the test. Here the consultant may want to give each group a name. Of course, to emphasize the point that grouping by ability can damage a student's self-concept, the group's name should indicated how they did on the pre-test. Some examples follow.

Top Group	Middle Group	Bottom Group
Speedboats	Motorboats	Rowboats
Rabbit	Cat	Turtle
Bluebirds	Redbirds	Buzzards
Porsche	Camaro	Model T
Rockets	Zeppelins	Piper Cub

The consultant may want to give each group some brief instruction in the areas in which they did poorly on the pre-test. However, after that they should be kept in their groups for other small group activities throughout the workshop to demonstrate that students should not be statically grouped based on the results of one test or activity.

SPACE

What is the best way to arrange the classroom for effective individualization? There is no one way to arrange one's classroom which will insure successful individualization. Some, but not all teachers, can individualize instruction when their classroom desks are arranged in straight rows. Other teachers find that learning centers are an effective way to organize the classroom setting. It is up to individual teachers to decide which room arrangement best suits their needs. However, there are some things a teacher should keep in mind when rearranging the classroom setting.

Most people, and this includes students, enjoy working in an attractive environment. The teachers should ask themselves if the students will be attracted to the classroom environment. Is it neat? The following questions may help the teachers reflect upon their classroom settings:

1. Are there places for displaying students' work?
2. Are there any interest centers for students?
3. Are the storage areas accessible to the students and neatly arranged.
4. Are the desks the appropriate size?
5. Are the desks and tables arranged for traffic to flow smoothly?
6. Is the room too hot or too cold?
7. Is there proper lighting throughout the room?
8. Are there spaces for large group, small group, and individual work?
9. Are there quiet spaces?
10. Is there a place for students to read besides their desks?
11. Are there any plants?
12. Are tables free from clutter?
13. Are pictures meaningful, well mounted, and large enough to be seen from a distance?

These are but a few of the questions teachers could ask themselves about their classroom settings. If teachers find they have answered "no" to many of the above questions, it may indicate a need for reorganization.

For more information on this topic, the consultant may want to refer to Question Five in the Learning Centers portion of the packet. Although this question deals specifically with organizing for learning centers, many of the ideas can aplly to classrooms without centers.

STRATEGY: *Ask participants to sketch their classroom as it is at present. Then have them make a new sketch of their classroom with the furniture rearranged. Next, have them put an S on all storage areas. Are these areas easily accessible to the students?*

STRATEGY: *Use the above questions as a needs assessment to determine whether the participants need additional help in organizing their classroom.*

TIME

There are many techniques which have been devised to help teachers schedule their time. However, like most other educational methods, there is no one way to schedule students that is guaranteed to work in every situation. Consequently, it is up to teachers to select their own scheduling technique which will meet their needs.

There are few teachers or students who can adapt to new scheduling techniques overnight. Therefore, it is the teacher who begins slowly scheduling a few students at a time who will find greater success. Teachers should make only a few changes at a time and not try any more until both teacher and students have adapted to the initial changes. This also helps teachers pinpoint early any problems the new scheduling technique may have. Remember, change is a gradual process for both teachers and students, so be patient.

STRATEGY: *See the information and strategies under Question Six in the Learning Centers portion of this packet.*

RECORD KEEPING

At this point the teachers may feel as though individualized instruction will create a three ring circus in their class. Not so! In fact it should do the opposite. Individualization, if well planned, should create an effective learning environment. The students will be working on tasks which are relevant and useful to them as individuals.

The backbone of individualization is record keeping. Unless teachers can keep accurate, up to date records on their students, individualization is a lost cause. It is up to the teachers to select or devise a record keeping system which meets their needs as well as those of the students.

Records should be kept for an entire class as well as the individual student. Large charts like the following give teachers a picture of needs of their class at a glance:

	Context Clues	*Main Idea*	*Following Directions*
Mary			
Tom	X		
Jean		X	
Frank			
Jim		X	

By looking at the chart, the teacher would know that Mary, Tom and Frank need some instruction on finding the main idea. It is also important for the teacher to keep records on individual progress. This type of record will enable the teacher to plan the student's instruction based on past achievement and future goals. The individual record is a most valuable reference when a teacher reports to parents. This type of record keeping will pinpoint for parents where the students are and what their instructional plans will be.

One way to make record keeping easier and yet more effective is to involve the students. Involvement in the record keeping process will help students become more responsible for their actions.

If they help keep the records, the students will know exactly where they are and what they are to do.

STRATEGY: *The section of this packet on record keeping for learning centers provides additional information and strategies.*

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

1. Instructional objectives are written by _____

_____

2. Instructional objectives are used to _____

_____

_____

3. In my class I use the following to assess a student's reading level:

_____

4. In my class I use the following to determine the needs of each individual student:

_____

5. In my class I also use the following to assess a student:

_____

_____

6. Students are placed in materials on the basis of _____

_____

7. I evaluate instructional materials for my class by _____

_____

8. When students need books or materials they _____

_____

9. When students are finished with a book or material they _____

_____

10. I organize my material by _____

_____

11. When students need a place or time to study they _____

_____

12. My students desks are arranged _____

_____

13. When students want to know what to do next and the teacher is busy, they

_____

_____

14. When a student wants to work with another student, he _____

_____

15. When students want to work on an individualized project, they _____

_____

16. When students need help, they _____

_____

17. I keep records by _____

_____

18. I evaluate students' progress by _____

_____

TITLE _____

REGION _____

PRIMARY ____ ELEMENTARY ____ MIDDLE ____ JR. HIGH ____

SR. HIGH ____ ABE ____

CATEGORY SYSTEM IN CONTENT ANALYSIS OF READING MATERIALS

Rankings by Category											TOTAL
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	

Title _____

Author(s) _____

Intended Reading Levels _____ Publisher _____

Intended Interest Levels _____ Copyright _____

Reading Skills Developed _____

_____

Prerequisite Skills _____

Program Components _____

_____

Typical Lesson Format _____

_____

_____

Estimated Cost: student material @ _____ teacher material @ _____

Rating Criteria: 5 = Excellent 3 = Average 1 = Unacceptable
4 = Good 2 = Weak 0 = Not provided/Unacceptable
NA = Not applicable

A. Suggested Use by Publisher
1. Use as a developmental program . . . . . ____
2. Use as a remedial program . . . . . ____
3. Use as a supplementary, skills emphasis program . . . . . ____
Overall Category Ranking . . . . . ____

B. Levels and/or Grades Intended
1. Clear statement of intended reading levels . . . . . ____
2. Formula for determining reading level stated . . . . . Y/N
3. Difficulty and number of new words/concepts appropriate for each level . . . . . ____
4. Clear statement of intended interest level . . . . . ____
5. Appropriateness for children . . . . . ____
6. Appropriateness for adults . . . . . ____
7. Appropriateness for ethnic groups . . . . . ____
Overall Category Ranking . . . . . ____

C. Skill Development
1. Chart and/or concise description of scope and sequence of skills . . . . ____
2. Sequence of skills appears to provide continuous development . . . . . ____
3. Skills/objectives stated in behavioral terms . . . . . Y/N
4. Skills developed for each lesson clearly stated . . . . . ____
5. Prerequisite skills for program clearly stated . . . . . ____

Title: _____

6. Clear, concise statement of program goals . . . . . _____
7. Program goals commensurate with skills to be developed . . . . . _____
Overall Category Ranking . . . . . _____

D. Instructional Strategies
1. Variety of format and style for skill presentation . . . . . _____
2. Variety of format in practice exercises for skills . . . . . _____
3. Adequate number of practice exercises for each skill . . . . . _____
4. Skill reviews provided and appropriately placed . . . . . _____
5. Adequate provision for skill application through oral and/or silent passages . . . . . _____
6. Suggestions and/or exercises to develop prerequisite skills . . . . . _____
7. Provision of branching activities for rapid progress in skill mastery . . . . . _____
8. Clear, concise written directions to students . . . . . _____
9. Inclusion of self-learning techniques . . . . . Y/N
10. Provision for scoring by students . . . . . Y/N
11. Progress graphing by students provided . . . . . Y/N
12. Minimal teacher involvement . . . . . Y/N
13. Programmed instruction . . . . . Y/N
14. Parts of program (certain lessons) can be used independently . . . . . Y/N
Overall Category Ranking _____

E. Subject Area Content
1. Appropriateness of subject content for interest level of intended group . . . . . _____
2. Content areas geared to a particular ethnic group . . . . . Y/N
3. Content primarily nonfiction . . . . . Y/N
4. Drawn from various academic disciplines . . . . . Y/N
5. Content primarily fictional narrative . . . . . Y/N
6. Content a combination of nonfiction and narrative . . . . . Y/N
7. Lessons grouped by content area . . . . . Y/N
Overall Category Ranking . . . . . _____

F. Placement and Evaluation
1. Diagnostic test or clear procedures for placement . . . . . _____
2. Progress tests or provision for movement within the program to more difficult skills/levels . . . . . _____
3. Achievement test or clearly stated procedures to measure success with program . . . . . _____
4. Criteria of acceptable performance for each lesson clearly stated . . . _____
5. Provision for immediate feedback of performance for each lesson . . . . _____
6. Quality of placement, progress and final tests . . . . . _____
7. Quality of diagnostic interpretation of tests . . . . . _____
8. Ease of administering, scoring and interpreting tests . . . . . _____
Overall Category Ranking . . . . . _____

G. Teacher Materials
1. Durability of guide . . . . . _____
2. Efficiency of overall layout for easy use . . . . . _____
3. Adequacy of suggested plan for lessons . . . . . _____
4. Adequacy of suggested supplementary activities for lessons . . . . . _____
5. Index and/or chart listing skills developed in each lesson . . . . . Y/N
6. Student material replicated in teacher material . . . . . Y/N

7. Diagnostic placement, progress and/or achievement tests included in guide . . . . . Y/N
8. Answer Key in guide . . . . . Y/N

Overall Category Ranking . . . . . ____

H. Teacher Prerequisities
1. Use of audio-visual equipment . . . . . Y/N
2. Ability to administer special, individualized tests . . . . . Y/N
3. Familiarity with special instructional strategies . . . . . Y/N
4. Provisions provided to strengthen teacher deficiencies that could interfere with program effectiveness . . . . . Y/N
5. Skills teachers need clearly stated . . . . . ____

Overall Category Rating . . . . . ____

I. Student Materials (Work/texts)
1. Cover and binding
   a. Durability of material . . . . . ____
   b. Attractiveness of cover . . . . . ____
   c. Ease in opening and holding book . . . . . ____
2. Page Layout
   a. Suitability of type for student group . . . . . ____
   b. Uncluttered pages with important concept and/or directions standing out . . . . . ____
3. Illustrations
   a. Good placement . . . . . ____
   b. Appropriate and meaningful for student group . . . . . ____
   c. Appropriate for word/concepts being developed . . . . . ____
4. Format
   a. Overall layout makes organization clear to students . . . . . ____
   b. Suitable length of units, chapters/divisions for student interest and ability . . . . . ____
   c. Usefulness of Table of Contents . . . . . ____
   d. Usefulness of Index . . . . . ____
   e. Similar format for each lesson . . . . . Y/N
   f. Answer Key in work/text . . . . . Y/N
   g. Progress Chart included in work/text . . . . . Y/N
   h. Progress and/or achievement tests included in work/text . . . . . Y/N
   i. Separate response sheet/pad . . . . . Y/N
5. Separate components must be used with work/text . . . . . Y/N

Overall Category Rating . . . . . ____

J. Other Materials Separate from Student/Teacher Texts (mandatory *)
1. Diagnostic placement, progress and/or achievement tests . . . . . Y/N ____
2. Worksheets/workbooks for extra skill drill . . . . . Y/N ____
3. Correlated readers for application . . . . . Y/N ____
4. Response sheets/pads . . . . . Y/N ____
5. Answer Keys . . . . . Y/N ____
6. Progress Charts . . . . . Y/N ____
7. Flashcards, games and/or puzzles . . . . . Y/N ____
8. Records and/or tapes . . . . . Y/N ____
9. Filmstrips and/or movies . . . . . Y/N ____
10. Special audio-visual equipment . . . . . Y/N ____

Overall Category Rating . . . . . ____

K. Costs
1. Practical for classroom use . . . . . ____

Title: _____

2. Practical for resource/remedial room . . . . . ____
3. Practical for clinics . . . . . ____
4. Expensive equipment necessary . . . . . Y/N
5. Re-usable student/teacher material . . . . . Y/N
6. Supplementary materials mandatory . . . . . Y/N
7. Special in-service training necessary . . . . . Y/N

Overall Category Rating . . . . . ____

Used with permission of Dr. Pamela Williams, Florida State University as a handout at a Right to Read workshop.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most effective ways to individualize within the classroom is through learning centers. Learning centers give the students the opportunity to work independently with materials that are on their level and materials that are of interest to them. In many cases the students will teach themselves, be taught by other students, and teach other students, thus freeing the teacher to diagnose and prescribe to meet the individual needs of each student.

However, it should be noted that a learning center does not replace the teacher, nor can it be the prime source of instruction. It can, however, be used to provide the necessary reinforcement for, expansion on, and enrichment of those skills and concepts previously taught by the teacher. Therefore, a learning center is a situation or actual area within the classroom where a child can become involved in a variety of learning activities.

Learning centers encourage independence and self-management in students. By giving students practice in setting realistic goals and in selecting activities for themselves, learning centers help students become self-directed. Since the students are working at activities which are more interesting and more suited to their individual needs, their attention span and power of concentration should increase. Thus, learning centers can be a most effective tool for individualizing instruction within the classroom.

The purpose of this section entitled "Learning Centers" is to guide one through the establishment of learning centers within the classroom. The following questions will serve as the keypoints for discussion:

QUESTION ONE:

What Beliefs Should a Teacher Have to Establish Good Learning Centers?

QUESTION TWO:

What are Some of the Main Functions and Types of Learning Centers?

QUESTION THREE:

What are the Components/Ingredients of an Effective Learning Center?

QUESTION FOUR:

How Can a Teacher Get Started with Learning Centers?

QUESTION FIVE:

How Can The Classroom be Organized to Accommodate Learning Centers?

QUESTION SIX:

How Does A Teacher Determine Who Should Go To Which Learning Center?

QUESTION SEVEN:

How Are Records Kept For Learning Centers?

QUESTION EIGHT:

How Can Learning Centers be Evaluated?

QUESTION NINE:

Where Can One Find Additional Sources and Ideas For Learning Centers?

Within this section of the packet, the above questions will be investigated. The purpose of this arrangement is to provide background information for those persons wishing to do an inservice workshop on the topic. After each question, strategies for delivering these ideas will be suggested. These suggested activities are designed to serve as a guide and therefore should be added to or chosen from depending upon the needs of the workshop facilitator and the participants.

STRATEGY: *The concept of learning centers may be introduced to the participants in a variety of ways. The strategy which follows is designed to serve not only to introduce learning centers but also to act as a warm-up activity. The time devoted to this activity will depend on the length of the workshop and the needs of the participants.*

Set up learning centers containing activities of interest to the participants. The subjects or skills dealt with in each center should be based on some expressed interests of the participants. Some sample ideas follow:

- *Macrame center*
- *Plant center*
- *Science fiction center*
- *Art center*
- *Sports center*

STRATEGY: *When discussing what learning centers are and what they can do, the following resources can be made into transparencies:*

RESOURCE ONE: *"What is a Learning Center?"*

RESOURCE TWO: *"What are Learning Centers?"*

RESOURCE THREE: *"Why use Learning Centers?"*

RESOURCE FOUR: *"What can Learning Centers do for Children?"*

STRATEGY: *Let participants offer definitions of what learning centers are. Record suggestions on a chalkboard, transparency, etc.*

STRATEGY: *Have participants quickly sketch their idea of a learning center.*

STRATEGY: *As this introduction gave a rationale for learning centers, the workshop leader must first justify the use of learning centers in the classroom. One way this can be done is to have the participants brainstorm or list three reasons why they would use learning centers. Share responses with whole group.*

QUESTION ONE:

WHAT BELIEFS SHOULD A TEACHER HAVE TO ESTABLISH GOOD LEARNING CENTERS?

Before teachers begin to think about individualizing their classrooms through learning centers, they must assess their own attitudes and philosophies towards individualized learning. To insure success of learning centers the teacher must:

- *believe that students can learn on their own*
- *believe that students should be given some choices in thier own learning*
- *be able to evaluate the needs and interests of each student*
- *be willing to assume the role of guide and assistant for each student*
- *see the value of students interacting with their environment*
- *be willing to allow the students to work together*
- *be willing to tolerate activity and responsible noise in the classroom*
- *be a good manager of time, space, and a wide variety of materials and equipment*
- *be willing to be very flexible and accept change*
- *be able to diagnose individual problems and look for progress in students as individuals*
- *be able to work creatively with the child's ideas and their own*
- *be able to focus on the process of learning rather than content of subjects taught.*

The number of changes or how fast they occur is not the issue, but rather, if the teacher is aware of what is to be accomplished by changing to learning centers. Success is determined by the teacher's ability to decide what needs to be changed and how these changes can be implemented.

These are some of the major factors to be considered when assessing whether the teacher has made the attitudinal transition to an individualized learning classroom situation. This list does indicate the teacher's role in a classroom where learning centers are utilized.

STRATEGY: *Let the participants respond to "Teacher's Self-Evaluation," RESOURCE FIVE. Discuss the results. This may also be used again at the end of the session on learning centers to assess attitudinal changes.*

QUESTION TWO:

What are some of the main functions and types of learning centers?

Now that the teacher's readiness for individualizing instruction through learning centers has been discussed and assessed, the topic of how or what they can be used for seems appropriate. The functions or uses for learning centers are many and varied. The following lists some of their major functions:

- diagnosing/prescribing
- reinforcing skills and concepts
- working on a project
- enriching the instructional program
- contract
- furthering interest in a topic or concept
- evaluating pupil's progress
- developing readiness

It should be noted that this list is not all-inclusive; learning centers can have other purposes. Some centers will have overlapping purposes or the purpose may change with the individual. For example, an activity in a center which serves to reinforce a skill for one student may be used to evaluate another's progress.

Learning centers may also be differentiated by type. This differentiation of centers is based on the content of the center or the skill to be taught at the center. The following are examples of particular "content" or "skill" learning centers which might be found at various levels within the school:

- art center
- phonics center
- recreational center
- science center
- reading comprehension center
- writing center

- housekeeping center
- television center
- social studies center
- manipulative center
- interest/hobby center
- language center
- math center
- listening center

Thus, learning centers can be designed to achieve many different ends through a variety of activities.

STRATEGY: *Have each participant write down one function of learning centers. Share responses. These can be listed on chalkboard, transparency, etc.*

STRATEGY: *Have each participant write down one type of learning center. Share responses. These can be listed on chalkboard, transparency, etc.*

STRATEGY: *If learning centers were developed to introduce the center concept, these learning centers can serve as the basis of discussion of types and functions. Have participants list all the centers and then list the function of each center.*

STRATEGY: *Use* RESOURCE SIX, *"Discussion Guide," to help participants explore the functions and types of learning centers.*

STRATEGY: *Share slides of learning centers which would illustrate their different types and functions.*

QUESTION THREE:

What are the components/ingredients of an effective learning center?

There are certain ingredients present in most effective learning centers:

- the name of the center
- the number of persons who can work at the center
- precise directions on
  - how to accomplish the task
  - how to correct the task
  - what to do with the completed product
  - how to keep records.

This type of information will permit the students' learning to be self-directed. The center would contain enough information to allow the students there to work independently.

The next important component of a learning center is that it makes some provision for choice. To give the students practice in setting realistic goals, they must be allowed to choose some of their activities. To increase the opportunity for choice, the students should be able to choose first from among the centers within the classroom and then from the activities within the center.

Learning centers must also provide activities at different levels of difficulty. This will allow students to work through the material at their own pace. It also provides the opportunity to be successful, and it is success which motivates the student to continue learning.

Still another way to motivate the learner is to make the activities within the center interesting and appealing. The use of games and manipulative materials will usually increase the appeal of a center. One must also remember to make the materials and activities relevant to the lives of the students. One of the best ways to make centers interesting and thereby self-motivating is to change them frequently to prevent the students from being bored. The teacher will find that this type of intrinsic motivation works better and is therefore preferable to extrinsic motivation.

Each learning center, therefore, should be properly labeled as to its name and the number of persons who can work there. It should also contain precise directions on how the tasks are to be accomplished. In brief, a learning center should contain materials which are: self-directing, self-correcting, self-selecting, self-pacing, self-motivating, and self-generating.

STRATEGY: *Make a transparency which lists the following components of an effective learning center:*

- *self-directed materials*
- *self-correcting materials*
- *self-selecting materials*
- *self-pacing materials*
- *self-motivating materials*
- *self-generating materials.*

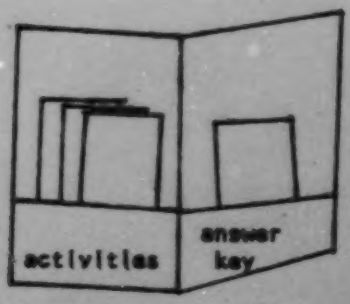
Uncover each component as it is discussed.

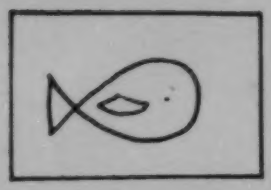
STRATEGY: *When discussing the concept that learning centers should be self-directed participants could be asked to list the ingredients of a learning center which would make it self-directed. For example:*

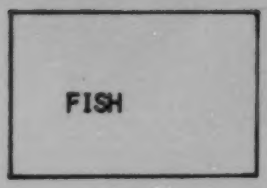
- *the name of the center*
- *the number of persons who can work at the center*
- *precise directions*

STRATEGY: *Since the ability to write simple directions is needed in developing centers, the participants should be given a sample center for which they write the directions. The directions for the center could be written at the level the participants feel their students can read. Participants could be grouped in small groups to write directions for the center. Each group should be given a different reading level. Share these directions.*

STRATEGY: *The workshop director could share examples of materials which would make a learning center self-correcting. Some examples of self-correcting devices follow:*







front

(If cards match, symbol will be the same)

back

Self-correcting devices offer students immediate feedback, which is an excellent learning tool.

STRATEGY: *The fact that students should be allowed to choose from among learning centers should be mentioned at this point; however, the management of self-selection should be dealt with under scheduling. Self-selection also means that the students are given choices from within a center. Have the participants list the choices available in the learning center sample* RESOURCE SEVEN, *"Sample Center."*

STRATEGY: *One way to make centers self-pacing is to arrange activities according to their level of difficulty. To demonstrate this the participants could break into small groups and each group could be given an activity or skill which could be performed at different levels of difficulty.*

STRATEGY: *Give a group the skill of sequencing of events and have them devise activities at different levels of difficulty.*

STRATEGY: *When discussing the concept that centers should be self-motivating, have participants lists things they have found successful in motivating their students. The examples could be listed according to levels. Many activities will span the grade levels. Example:*

ELEMENTARY	*SECONDARY*	*ABE*
------*games*------		
-----*manipulatives*-----		

STRATEGY: RESOURCE EIGHT, *"How Can Teachers Motivate Children to Use the Centers?" can be used as a transparency and discussed.*

STRATEGY: *The final point to be discussed is that centers should generate an interest in a given topic. Once again examples can be quickly solicited from the participants. Some activities which might generate follow-up study are:*

- *pen-pal letters*
- *rock display*
- *travel brochures*
- *plants*

STRATEGY: *Break into small groups. Give each group one of the above topics, such as self-directed materials. Have them brainstorm activities or ideas which would make a center have this type of materials. Share ideas with entire group.*

STRATEGY: *Use* RESOURCE NINE, *"Learning Centers Should..." as a summary of what learning centers should contain.*

QUESTION FOUR:

How can a teacher get started with learning centers?

To begin actual construction of a learning center, the teacher can use the following as a guide:

- Evaluate the needs and interests of the students
- Determine the objective(s) you want the students to reach
- Determine what behaviors are desired to accomplish the objective
- Review space facilities
- Develop the skill or concept into
  - a learning activity
  - an applying activity
  - an extending activity
- Make sure the activities fit the objective
- Prepare directions for the center
- Make a sketch of the learning center
- Collect all necessary materials and equipment to complete each activity and place them in each center
- Make the center
- Prepare a floor plan
- Prepare a traffic plan
- Provide a means of evaluating students' work
- Develop an appropriate time schedule to accomodate your learning center program
- Prepare the students to use the learning center

These steps are not to be followed verbatim; specific procedures to be followed will differ with each center being made.

Another area a teacher should give close attention to is the introduction of the learning center to the classroom. The introduction should be a gradual, well-planned process. The first learning centers should all contain basically the same procedures; for example, the directions should be located in the same place. The teacher will need to provide a great

deal of assistance at the beginning. If available, an aide or volunteer could be stationed at the center until the students get into the routine. If an aide or volunteer is not available, train one student to use the center. This student, in turn, can teach others individually or in small groups to use the center.

After the center has been constructed and used by the students, the teacher should continually evaluate it and make any necessary changes. The following questions may help evaluate a teacher's first attempt at learning centers:

- Will the students select this center out of interest? - both subject matter and eye appeal?
- Does the center offer a variety of activities?
- Are the activities at various levels of difficulty?
- Are the students able to follow the directions?

  If not, are they

  - written clearly and simply?
  - written in words of more than two syllables?
  - written as a series of steps?

- Are the students able to correct their own work?
- Is the scheduling procedure working effectively?
- Are accurate records of pupil progress being kept?
- Are there some additional activities which could be added?
- Is the center's effectiveness being evaluated?
- What changes can be made to make the center more effective?

After the students and teacher can handle a simple learning center situation, the teacher can begin gradually to increase the number and complexity of centers.

STRATEGY: *An effort should be made to determine at what stage in the development of learning centers the participants are. Some participants may not have attempted them at all or may have tried learning centers already and failed. Others may have one successful center operating in their classroom. Thus, each needs help on where to go from there to more fully adopt learning centers into their classrooms. Group the participants into groups with a variety of learning centers experiences to discuss how each can more fully adopt centers into their classroom.*

STRATEGY: *Use the list of steps to develop learning centers,* RESOURCE TEN, *"How do Teachers Start?" as a handout or transparency. Discuss each step.*

STRATEGY: *Solicit the steps in implementing learning centers from the group. List on chartpaper or blackboard.*

STRATEGY: *Give the participants an assortment of materials, such as construction paper, books, poster board, and have them design a center from scratch. Participants can be grouped by levels or interest in a topic or skill.*

STRATEGY: *Let each individual sketch a learning center they could make with the materials and facilities they have in their own classroom. Check to see if they included all the common elements for an effective center. Sketches may be shared by taping them to the wall. Give the participants an opportunity to browse.*

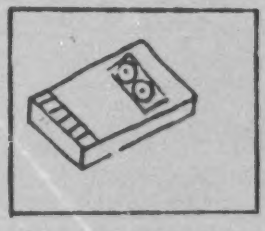
STRATEGY: *Solicit procedures for introducing learning centers to students from participants. List on a transparency or chalkboard or use* RESOURCE ELEVEN, *"How can Teachers Prepare the Students?" as a transparency.*

STRATEGY: *Have participants write the steps they would take to introduce the center they sketched to their students. Share ideas.*

STRATEGY: *Break the participants into small groups. This could be done by distributing cards which would have one of the following symbols on it:*

typewriter

record player



cassette player

All the typewriters would be in one group, the record players in the second, and the cassette players in the third. Then each group could plan a center around the piece of equipment listed on their cards. Give the groups newsprint or a transparency master on which to sketch their center. Post ideas and share with the entire group.

QUESTION FIVE:

How can the classroom be organized to accomodate learning centers?

As teachers move toward learning centers they must begin to consider the organization of their classrooms. How can they organize the physical environment to provide for optimum learning conditions? Each classroom and its contents needs to be considered individually in light of the needs of both students and teacher. However, there are some general tips and procedures which can help a teacher organize the physical setting.

Since the classroom is the main setting in which learning occurs, every part of the room should be utilized to the fullest. Every nook and cranny should have the potential for student experience or discovery of some type of learning. Therefore, teachers and students should take a good look around their classrooms and make a note of any potential learning space.

A sketch of one's classroom floor space serves as a good basis for planning learning centers. After surveying the classroom for potential learning sites, the teacher may begin to plan the centers. In planning the centers, one thing a teacher should keep in mind is the flow of traffic. After deciding where the centers are to be placed, the teacher should draw arrows on the sketch to indicate how the traffic will flow. This may avert some potential problems. The teacher will want to keep the traffic at a minimum around quiet work areas.

In planning work areas the teacher should utilize the space to provide a balance between noisy and quiet work areas. There should also be spaces set aside for both independent study and group interaction. To achieve this end, the teacher may want to section off parts of the room into learning centers and work areas. Establishing a nook gives the students: a place to talk, a place to be alone and work alone, a place to work with friends, a place to move about and a place to think.

If after surveying the classroom the teacher feels there are not enough places for centers, they can be made. One very simple way of sectioning off the room is to hang a piece of cloth weighted with a dowel from the ceiling. This piece of hanging cloth can also be utilized as a display area. The same effect can be achieved by using cardboard boxes which have been cut apart.

Another important thing to remember in organizing the classroom environment is to label everything adequately. Because signs and labels function like maps to direct students to work independently, they serve to free the teacher's time. Signs and labels also teach students the invaluable skill of following directions, thus enabling them to work independently.

Provisions for storage need also be taken into consideration. Storage areas must be accessible to students to be of maximum benefit. The students must also be trained in how to use and store materials and equipment. Once again, sufficient signs and labels on materials and equipment will permit students to use materials without the teacher's immediate supervision.

Thus, in planning the learning environment, the teacher should consider the following:

- Does the traffic flow enhance or inhibit learning?
- Are provisions made for the display of students' work?
- Is there adequate storage space which is accessible to the students?
- Do signs and labels give students adequate directions to work independently?
- Are there noisy as well as quiet work areas?

Once again the teacher should be cautioned about changing too quickly. Although the plan for change can be organized in advance, it should not be implemented all at one time. Students and teacher should attempt small changes which will gradually accomplish their goal.

STRATEGY: *The following can be used as either a handout or a transparency:*

a. *"Places for Learning"* RESOURCE TWELVE
b. *"Storage Techniques"* RESOURCE THIRTEEN
c. *"Signs and Labels"* RESOURCE FOURTEEN
d. *"Useful Classroom Equipment"* RESOURCE FIFTEEN
e. *"Methods of Display"* RESOURCE SIXTEEN

If using the above as handouts, require the participants to add an idea to the handout in order to get a copy. This will make the participants read the handout plus provide an opportunity for them to share ideas.

STRATEGY: *Use worksheet on classroom organization* RESOURCE SEVENTEEN. *Discuss. Let teachers share their ideas on organizational techniques.*

STRATEGY: *Participants can be given time to make any of the items mentioned in* RESOURCE TWELVE *through* SIXTEEN.

STRATEGY: *Give each participant a piece of newsprint. Have participants sketch their classrooms, add nooks and crannies for learning, and then illustrate the traffic flow. Tape newsprint to the wall and allow participants to browse.*

STRATEGY: *Show slides or real exhibits (large enough for participants to see) of organizational techniques, such as signs and labels.*

QUESTION SIX:

How does a teacher determine who should go to which learning center?

This question brings the teacher to the matter of scheduling. Planning or scheduling devices help students know where and when to go. They should also indicate what tasks or activities are to be done at any given time. Using a schedule helps to keep some centers from being overcrowded while others are not being used. Scheduling also helps the teacher monitor the students' work. Scheduling is therefore of the utmost importance if the students are to be independent, self-directed learners.

The type of scheduling device used should depend on the needs and capabilities of the students. Younger students or students who have difficulty reading should be given more simple devices. As students' independence increases they can use more sophisticated devices. However, a scheduling device should be kept as simple as possible to achieve its purpose. Once again, it is important for the teacher to begin scheduling slowly. Students' ability to handle scheduling will depend upon their experience in working independently. Teachers must take the time to train the students on the workings of the scheduling device to be used if it is to succeed.

Besides variation in the type of scheduling device to be used, teachers may also vary the basis for scheduling. One way in which the teacher can determine who goes where is to base scheduling on the individual needs of the students as determined through diagnosis. Another way to determine who should go to which center is to let the students select centers. This type of selection should be monitored in some way by the teacher. Still another basis for scheduling is to require students to work at certain centers. These centers are usually ones which present information which is basic to the curriculum.

Consequently, before scheduling, the teacher should consider the following questions:

- Is the classroom to be wholly learning center oriented or are learning centers to be used in conjunction with traditional methods?
- Is the scheduling to be done by the teacher or jointly by students and teacher?
- Are the students required to work at all the learning centers every day or will they be allowed to choose centers?

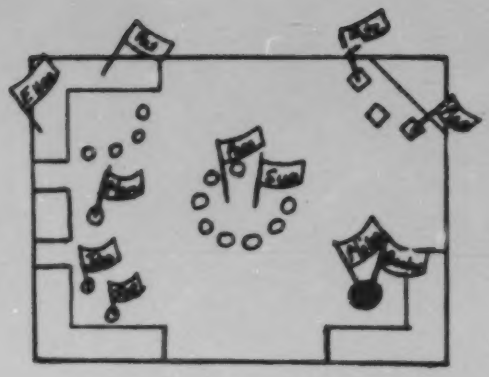
Once the teachers can answer these questions they can choose the type of scheduling which best suits their needs and those of their students.

One technique for scheduling is rotational scheduling. In this type of scheduling the students "rotate" from center to center. In this system, students are not given a choice as to what centers they will go to or when they are to go, but they may be allowed to choose from the activities within the center.

The following is an example of a rotational scheduling technique:

Contracts are another means of getting the students into the centers. In a contract, students and teacher agree as to what the student is to do. In a contract agreement, the students are generally given the freedom to choose what they will do to achieve their goals. This type of scheduling requires the student already to be able to work independently. A sample contract follows:

Teachers may also assign students to centers based on their diagnosed needs and interests and then let them choose when they would like to go to a center. Or students may be given the freedom to choose their own course of study from the resources available. An example of this type follows:



There are many different techniques for scheduling. Teachers will have to choose the one which best suits them. The important thing for teachers to remember is to thoroughly explain scheduling procedures to the students. Even with many "dry runs" through the scheduling procedure it will generally take the students a while to follow the schedule systematically.

STRATEGY: *Share* RESOURCE EIGHTEEN, *"Scheduling Techniques," with participants.*

STRATEGY: *Bring some sample scheduling devices to share with the participants or have participants bring samples they have found successful.*

STRATEGY: *Have participants share scheduling ideas. Each participant could sketch one technique and tape it to the wall. Give participants time to look at and copy other ideas.*

STRATEGY: *After seeing some sample techniques, let participants make a scheduling device to use in their classroom.*

STRATEGY: *Have participants work through a simulated schedule. There can be actual activities for them to perform at the centers or they can just move through the schedule. Or a schedule can be utilized to get them into small groups.* RESOURCE NINETEEN *is an example of a scheduling technique that could be used.*

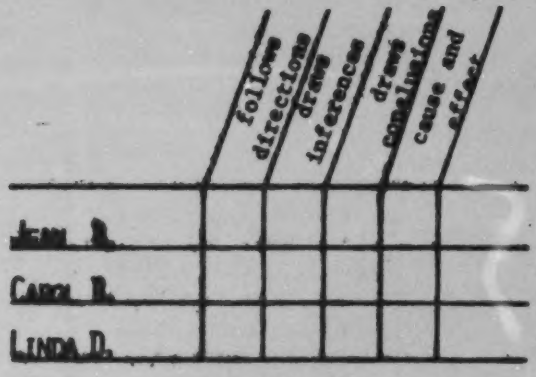
QUESTION SEVEN:

How are records kept for learning centers?

Record keeping is a continuous process of measuring and reporting student growth and learning progress. It is a very important process for teachers, administrators, students, and parents. Records provide parents with a comprehensive picture of the student's activities in school. Records are most important to students in that they help develop their responsibility for charting and following through a course of study. They also give students a feeling of accomplishment. The teacher needs records to diagnose and prescribe instruction for the students. Records also allow a substitute to take over for the teacher. Finally, records give the administrator a picture of the progress of the entire school, and point out strengths and weaknesses in the instructional program.

Records should be kept for the whole class as well as for each individual student. If at all possible, both types of record keeping should be a joint effort between student and teacher. This will involve the students in diagnosing their needs and becoming aware of their own progress.

Class records should reflect skills each student has mastered or has been exposed to. At a glance, the teacher can spot the need for specific skill grouping. Class records can also tell the teacher who has and who has not completed an activity. An example follows:



/ indicates the student worked at the activity
X indicates the student successfully completed the activity

Students can keep their own individual records which should include the following information:

- which centers they have used
- when they have used the centers
- what activities they have completed within the center

Records may also provide some type of marking system which would permit the student to signal for help on an activity. The following is an example of a simple individual record keeping device:

SAM		
CENTER	DATE	COMPLETED
Writing	4/20	✓
Art	4/28	

Another type of record keeping technique is the record of a student-teacher conference. A notebook can be used to record both the results of a conference and information gathered from the teacher observations. For example:

A teacher may wish to use a simple chart which would indicate by some type of symbols if a conference is needed or has been held. This lets the teacher know at a glance who has not had a conference recently.

Records not only show what the student has done but also help plan for future learning. It is up to the teacher and students to choose and utilize the type(s) of record keeping device(s) which best suit their needs. Thus, records are essential if learning centers are to be effective.

STRATEGY: *Use "Record Keeping," RESOURCE TWENTY, as a handout or transparency to illustrate the different types of record keeping systems. Again have participants add an idea if they take a handout.*

STRATEGY: *Break into small groups according to grade levels. Let each group illustrate some record keeping devices on newsprint. Share ideas with entire group.*

STRATEGY: *Bring sample record keeping devices or have participants bring sample record keeping to share. Give participants an opportunity to copy or make some of the devices.*

QUESTION EIGHT:

How can learning centers be evaluated?

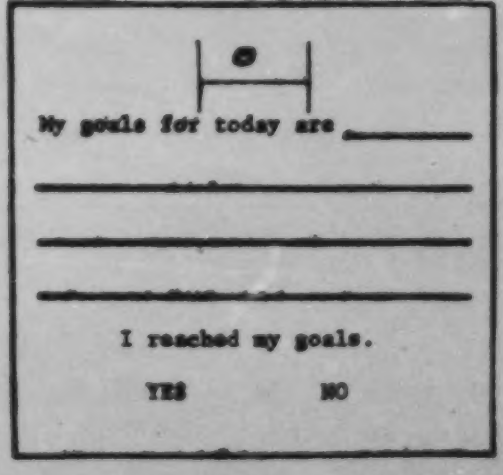
Evaluation cannot be kept separate from record keeping. Records tell what was accomplished while evaluation tells how well it was accomplished. Evaluation, like record keeping, can be accomplished by both students and teacher.

Students should continually evaluate their progress. They should ask themselves, "What have I done?" "How well have I done it?" "What more should I do?" and "How do I feel about what I have done?" One should note that the first three questions are concerned with the cognitive domain while the fourth deals with the affective domain. How students feel about what they have done has a major effect on the learning process. Students who feel positive towards themselves and their work are much more likely to work harder to achieve success.

The student-teacher conference is an excellent means of evaluating the student's attitude as well as the instructional program. The conference provides the student with an opportunity to share, discuss, and react. Although a conference may appear to be an informal evaluation technique it should be structured if the desired results are to be obtained. In planning and carrying out a conference the teacher should

- designate a conference period or block of time
- design a method for children to sign up for a conference
- determine a place for the conference
- decide the standards which other students must follow while the teacher is conferencing
- indicate to the students what is to be discussed at the conference
- remind students to prepare questions they wish to ask
- discuss and agree upon task or tasks that will promote growth and success
- keep a careful record of each student's strengths and needs.

There are also many other devices which may be utilized to evaluate student growth. The following is only one example:



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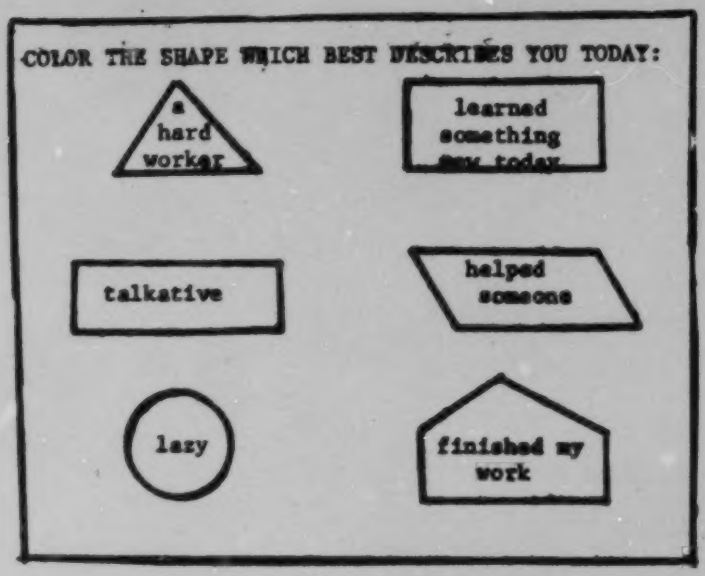
Besides evaluating each student's accomplishments, the teacher should continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the learning centers and make changes accordingly.

STRATEGY: *Have participants fill out an evaluation form on their workshop activities. The following is an example of an evaluation form that could be used:*



STRATEGY: *Use* RESOUCE TWENTY ONE, *"Evaluation Techniques" as a handout or transparency. Require participants to add an evaluation technique if they would like a handout.*

STRATEGY: *Use* RESOURCE TWENTY TWO, *"How are Learning Centers Evaluated?" as a transparency when discussing evaluation.*

QUESTION NINE:

Where can one find additional sources of information on ideas for learning centers?

There are many excellent sources of information on ideas for learning centers. A bibliography of these sources is included in the packet. Teachers should also keep a notebook or a file on ideas they have seen. This should be a joint effort within a school or district.

Students themselves can not only furnish ideas for centers but thay can aid in their construction. A teacher could also utilize the services of aides, volunteers, interested parents, retired persons, and college students in the development of learning centers.

Another time saving idea is to use centers or games which have an adaptable format. Many basic learning center designs and gameboards can be used repeatedly by changing the activity or skill to be taught.

There are some considerations which should be kept in mind when constructing and implementing centers which make it an easier process.

- move slowly into learning centers
- learning centers take time to construct but they will save time later
- learning centers and their parts should be made of durable material
- some centers should be designed to serve all students; for example, the creative writing center.

STRATEGY: *Use the enclosed bibliography,* RESOURCE TWENTY THREE, *as a handout. Have books available for the participants to browse through.*

STRATEGY: *Provide some resource material and give the participants time to browse and jot down titles. A form such as the following sometimes helps get participants into the books and material:*

1.	2.
JOT down the names of four resources and one idea from each.	
3.	4.

STRATEGY: *Have teachers comment on those sources which they feel are good and suggest other sources that are not listed.*

STRATEGY: *Let the participants have a "make it and take it" session based on ideas they find in books or magazines.*

CONCLUSION

Learning centers are but one way to individualize the classroom. It is, however, a most effective way. Learning centers provide students opportunities to work independently with materials that are both on their achievement level and of interest to them. Because of this, the students are able to avoid becoming frustrated because of failure or bored because of lack of interest in learning. Learning centers encourage students to become self-motivated, independent learners.

It should be noted, however, that there are some students who are unable to work on their own. But usually with careful guidance a student can be gradually led to independence. The important thing is for the teacher to remember to be patient. If a teacher expresses impatience with a student who is unable to work independently, this will cause the student to become frustrated which is exactly what learning centers are designed to avoid.

Teachers should also be made aware of the fact that setting up and maintaining learning centers is time consuming. The planning, developing, record keeping and evaluating of learning centers does take time but the teacher should find this time well spent once the students begin working independently.

Most teachers who utilize learning centers in their classrooms find their advantages far outweigh their disadvantages both for them and their students. But, a teacher should be aware of both the advantages and disadvantages of learning centers before trying them in the classroom. If teachers are aware of the disadvantages as well as the advantages of learning centers, they will be much less likely to give up when they reach the first pitfall.

This packet has attempted to demonstrate and explain how teachers can individualize learning through the use of learning centers. Teachers may choose to utilize one learning center or they may wish to devise a plan to convert their classroom to a total learning center situation. This is the decision of the individual teacher.

STRATEGY: *Use the following transparencies which were mentioned to introduce and give the rationale of learning centers to summarize:*

RESOURCE ONE: *"What is a learning center?"*
RESOURCE TWO: *"What are learning centers?"*
RESOURCE THREE: *"Why use learning centers?"*
RESOURCE FOUR: *"What can learning centers do for children?"*

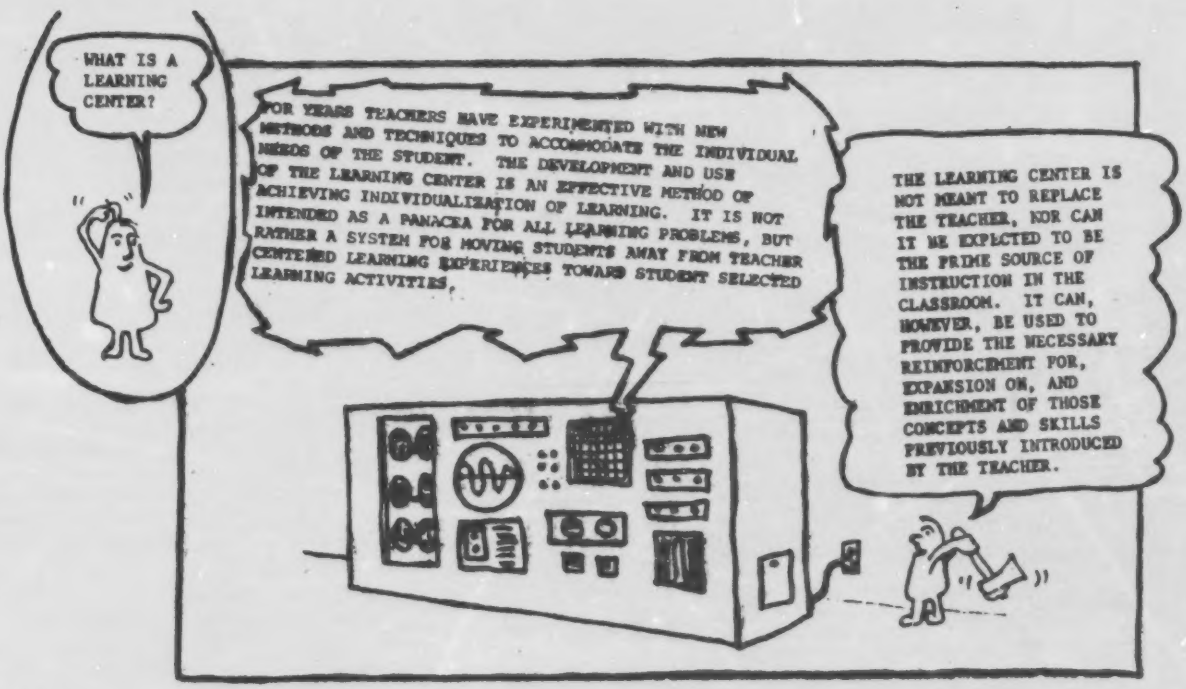
STRATEGY: *Use* **RESOURCE TWENTY-FOUR** *"Advantages and Disadvantages of Learning Centers," as a handout. Discuss.*

STRATEGY: *Administer* **RESOURCE FIVE,** *"Self-Evaluation," again. Compare individual responses with the pretest.*

STRATEGY: *Use* **RESOURCE TWENTY-FIVE,** *"What can teachers expect?" as a transparency. Discuss each point.*

STRATEGY: *Divide the group into two sections. Let one group list the advantages of learning centers while the other group lists the disadvantages. Choose two from each group to serve as debators. Choose a moderator. Let the two groups debate the pros and cons of learning centers. The other participants can be the judges.*

What Is a Learning Center?


WHAT IS A LEARNING CENTER?
FOR YEARS TEACHERS HAVE EXPERIMENTED WITH NEW METHODS AND TECHNIQUES TO ACCOMMODATE THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF THE STUDENT. THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE LEARNING CENTER IS AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF ACHIEVING INDIVIDUALIZATION OF LEARNING. IT IS NOT INTENDED AS A PANACEA FOR ALL LEARNING PROBLEMS, BUT RATHER A SYSTEM FOR MOVING STUDENTS AWAY FROM TEACHER CENTERED LEARNING EXPERIENCES TOWARD STUDENT SELECTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES.
THE LEARNING CENTER IS NOT MEANT TO REPLACE THE TEACHER, NOR CAN IT BE EXPECTED TO BE THE PRIME SOURCE OF INSTRUCTION IN THE CLASSROOM. IT CAN, HOWEVER, BE USED TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY REINFORCEMENT FOR, EXPANSION ON, AND ENRICHMENT OF THOSE CONCEPTS AND SKILLS PREVIOUSLY INTRODUCED BY THE TEACHER.

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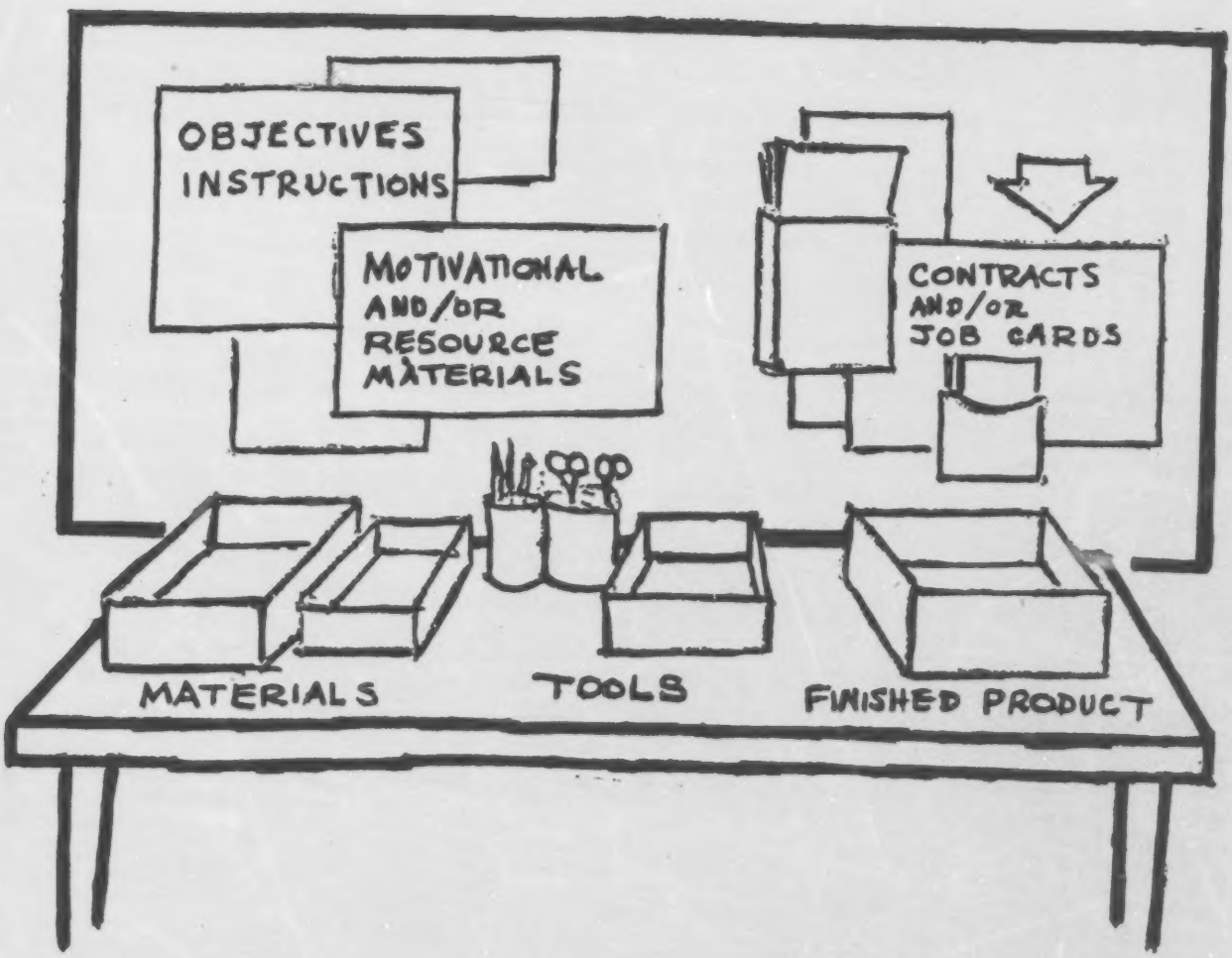
What are

Learning Centers ?



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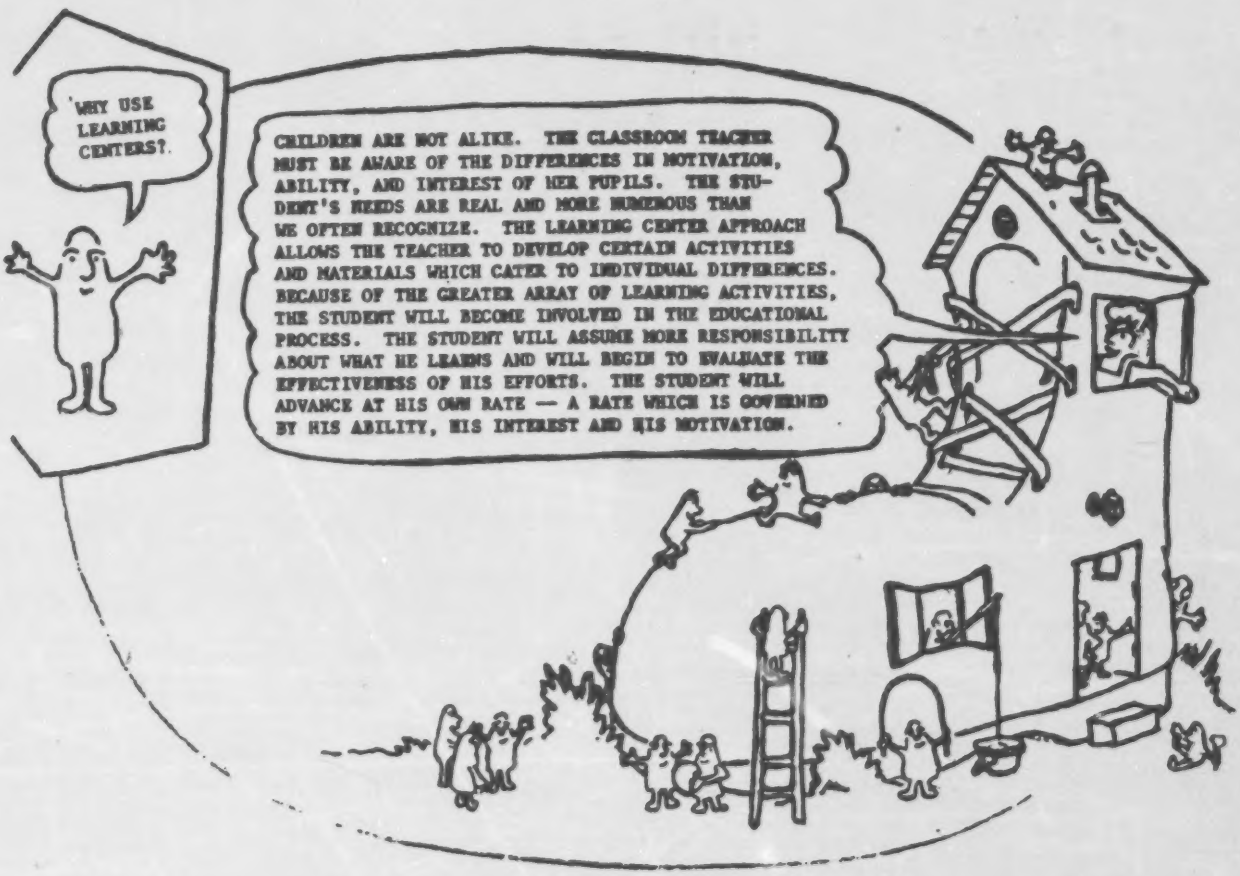
RESOURCE TWO

Why Use Learning Centers?


WHY USE LEARNING CENTERS?
CHILDREN ARE NOT ALIKE. THE CLASSROOM TEACHER MUST BE AWARE OF THE DIFFERENCES IN MOTIVATION, ABILITY, AND INTEREST OF HER PUPILS. THE STUDENT'S NEEDS ARE REAL AND MORE NUMEROUS THAN WE OFTEN RECOGNIZE. THE LEARNING CENTER APPROACH ALLOWS THE TEACHER TO DEVELOP CERTAIN ACTIVITIES AND MATERIALS WHICH CATER TO INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES. BECAUSE OF THE GREATER ARRAY OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES, THE STUDENT WILL BECOME INVOLVED IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS. THE STUDENT WILL ASSUME MORE RESPONSIBILITY ABOUT WHAT HE LEARNS AND WILL BEGIN TO EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HIS EFFORTS. THE STUDENT WILL ADVANCE AT HIS OWN RATE — A RATE WHICH IS GOVERNED BY HIS ABILITY, HIS INTEREST AND HIS MOTIVATION.

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What Can Learning Centers Do For Children?

ENCOURAGE:

* SELF MANAGEMENT
* SELF DIRECTION
* INDEPENDENCE
* CREATIVITY
* SENSITIVITY TO OTHERS
* CRITICAL, REFLECTIVE THINKING
* LONGER ATTENTION SPAN
* BETTER CONCENTRATION
* SKILLS IN A SEQUENTIAL MANNER
* GREATER ACADEMIC UNDERSTANDING

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SELF EVALUATION

FOR THE TEACHER WHO WISHES TO TRY THE CENTER APPROACH

yes no 1. Am I able to evaluate the interests and needs of my students?

yes no 2. Am I willing to move to a role of guide and assistant for each child?

yes no 3. Can I tolerate activity and reasonable noise in the classroom?

yes no 4. Am I a good manager of time, space, and a wide variety of materials and equipment?

yes no 5. Am I flexible and able to accept change?

yes no 6. Can I diagnose individual problems and look for progress in students as individuals?

yes no 7. Can I work creatively with the child's ideas as well as my own?

yes no 8. Do I believe that children can learn on their own if provided with appropriate materials?

yes no 9. Do I believe that a child should be given some choice in his own learning?

yes no 10. Do I see value in children interacting with environment, both materials and peers?

yes no 11. Am I willing to allow children to work together, accepting the attitude that helping one another is not cheating?

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Learning Centers Approach To Classroom Management

Discussion Purpose:

To help teachers identify learning centers and their function

(Step 1)	Possible Responses:
Teachers will enumerate a variety of activities which could be successful in learning centers in a given grade. Focusing Question: "What experiences would you like for these children to have in your grade during the week?" Follow-through: "Anyone else want to contribute?" "What are some ofhter activities and experiences you'd like?"	Reading Groups Spelling Writing Art Follow-up seatwork for reading Creative writing Free reading Social studies projects Science experiments Manipulative math Written math drill Math projects English Specific reading skillsbooks Listening for pleasure Listening for skills
(Steps 2 & 3) Teachers will group the items they have listed and state the common characteristics they see. Focusing Questions: 1. Do you see that some of these experiences could be put together because they are alike? 2. How are they alike? Follow-through: "Does anyone want to add to this group?" "Does anyone want to start a new group?"	Possible Responses: Group 1: Writing Creative writing Group 2: Seatwork Reading skills Group 3: Social Studies projects Math projects Group 4: English Spelling Writing Group 5: Written math drill Reading skillsbooks Group 6: Reading group Free reading Group 7: Listening for pleasure Listening for skills

Discussion guide continued

(Step 4) Teachers will label the groups which they have formed (which could become the various learning centers). Focusing Question: "What names can we give to our groups of experiences which we want these children to have?" Follow-through: "What are some other names we might think of for this group?" "How do the rest of you feel about this label?" (if a teacher gives an answer which you feel is inappropriate).	Possible Responses: Group 1: Writing center Group 2: Reading skills Group 3: Projects Creative center Arts and projects center Group 4: Written English Communication skills Group 5: Drill center Skill center Practice makes perfect center Group 6: Reading Group 7: Listening center
(Step 5) Teachers will find additional bases for grouping. Focusing Question: "Could we put some of our experiences into different groups?"	Possible Responses: Free Reading Listening for pleasure Could be grouped together as a group for leisure time activities or library/listening center. Seatwork in reading Reading skillsbooks Listening for skills Could be used for a skills group.

Discussion guide continued

(Step 6) Teachers will subsume items under more than one label and explain the relationships they see. Focusing Question: "Are there some items in this group that could be put in another group?" (Repeat)	Possible responses: Any and all groupings should be explored.

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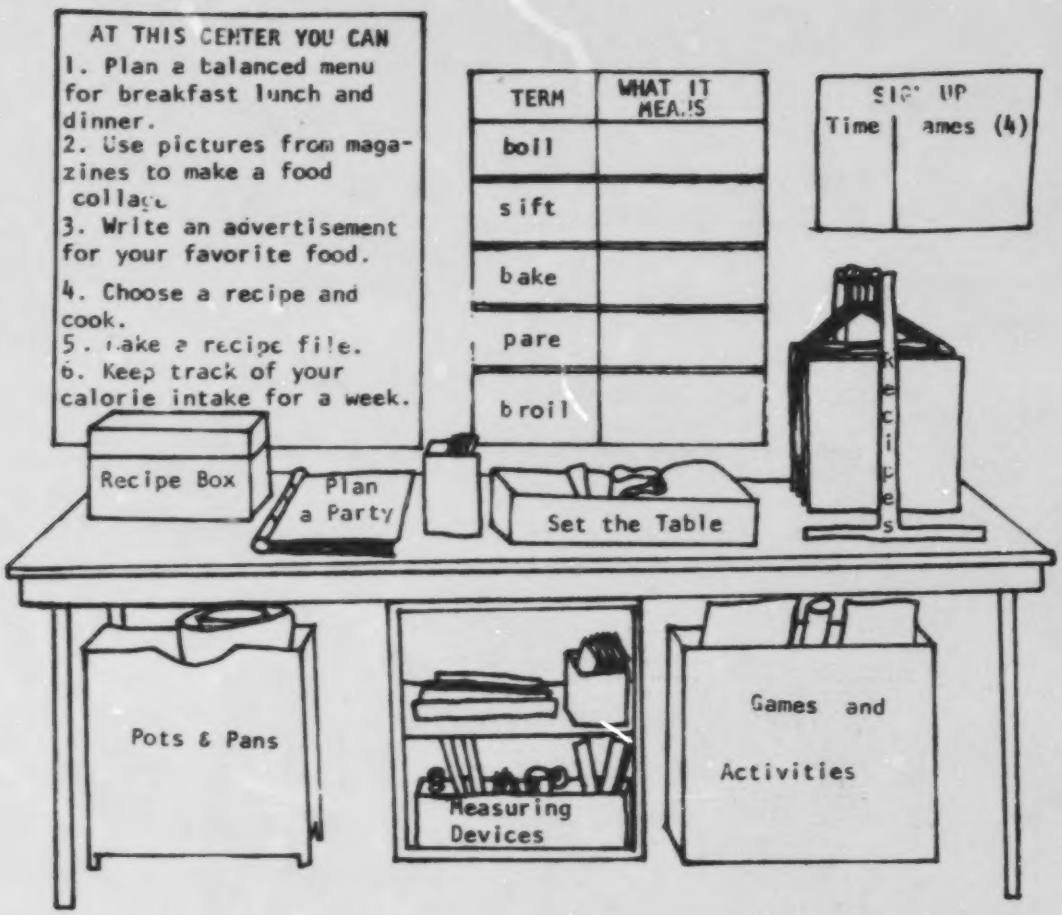
RESOURCE SIX

COOKING CENTER

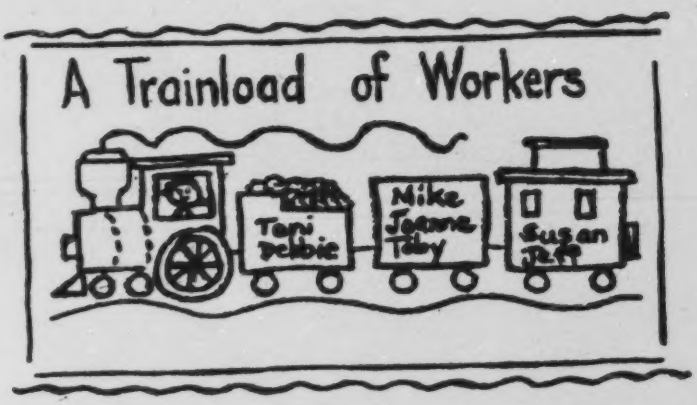


RESOURCE SEVEN

How Can Teachers Motivate Children. . .

. . .to use the centers?

* INVOLVE THE STUDENTS WHEN PLANNING THE ACTIVITIES
* VARY THE ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES
* PROVIDE MATERIAL APPROPRIATE TO STUDENTS' ABILITIES AND INTEREST LEVELS
* ARRANGE THE CENTERS ATTRACTIVELY



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RESOURCE EIGHT

LEARNING CENTERS SHOULD. . . .

*CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

1. NAME OF CENTER
2. NUMBER WHO CAN WORK AT THE CENTER
3. PRECISE DIRECTIONS
   - A. TO ACCOMPLISH THE TASK
   - B. HOW TO CORRECT THE TASK
   - C. WHAT TO DO WITH THE COMPLETED PAPERS
   - D. KEEP RECORDS

*PROVIDE CHOICES

1. AMONG CENTERS
2. WITHIN THE CENTER

*PROVIDE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF DIFFICULTY

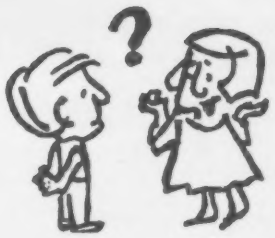
*BE INTERESTING AND APPEALING

*BE MANIPULATIVE

*CHANGE FREQUENTLY

RESOURCE NINE

How Do Teachers Start?



TEACHER'S ROLE

* EVALUATE THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF THE STUDENTS
* DETERMINE THE OBJECTIVE YOU WANT THE STUDENTS TO REACH
* DETERMINE WHAT BEHAVIORS ARE DESIRED TO ACCOMPLISH THE OBJECTIVE
* REVIEW SPACE FACILITIES
* DEVELOP THE SKILL OR CONCEPT INTO
  A. A LEARNING ACTIVITY
  B. AN APPLYING ACTIVITY
  C. AN EXTENDING ACTIVITY
* MAKE SURE ACTIVITIES FIT THE OBJECTIVE
* PREPARE DIRECTIONS FOR THE CENTER
* MAKE A SKETCH OF THE LEARNING CENTER
* COLLECT ALL NECESSARY MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT TO COMPLETE EACH ACTIVITY AND PLACE THEM IN EACH CENTER
* MAKE THE CENTER
* PREPARE A FLOOR PLAN
* PREPARE A TRAFFIC PLAN
* PROVIDE A MEANS OF EVALUATING STUDENTS' WORK
* DEVELOP AN APPROPRIATE TIME SCHEDULE TO ACCOMODATE YOUR LEARNING CENTER PROGRAM
* PREPARE THE STUDENTS TO USE THE LEARNING CENTER

How Can Teachers

Prepare the Children?

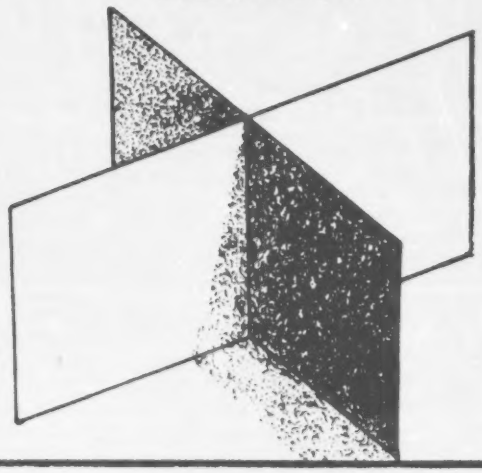
THE TEACHER WILL WANT TO CONSIDER ALL, OR SOME, OF THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS, DEPENDING UPON HER CHOSEN PROGRAM.

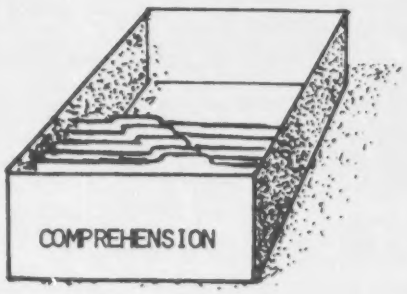
* MAKE FIRST LEARNING CENTERS SIMPLE
* MAKE THE DIRECTIONS VERY SIMPLE, CLEAR AND CONCISE
* USE SIMILAR PROCEDURES AT EACH OF THE FIRST CENTERS
* PROVIDE A GREAT DEAL OF ASSISTANCE IN THE BEGINNING
* TEACH ONE CHILD HOW TO USE THE CENTER. THIS CHILD CAN TEACH OTHERS INDIVIDUALLY OR IN SMALL GROUPS HOW TO USE THE CENTER.
* AT THE BEGINNING, USE THE LEARNING CENTERS FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY. GRADUALLY INCREASE TIME IN CENTERS.
* SET BEHAVIOR STANDARDS WITH THE CHILDREN.
* DEVELOP STANDARDS OF PROCEDURES
* DISCUSS METHOD OF EVALUATION

RESOURCE ELEVEN

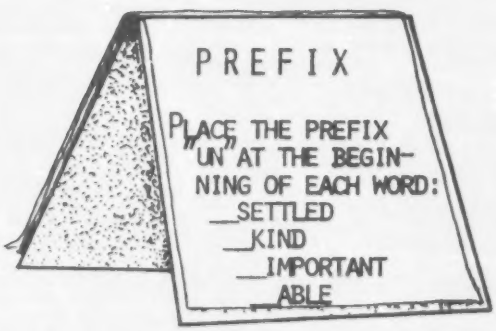
PLACES FOR LEARNING

CARDBOARD BOOTH

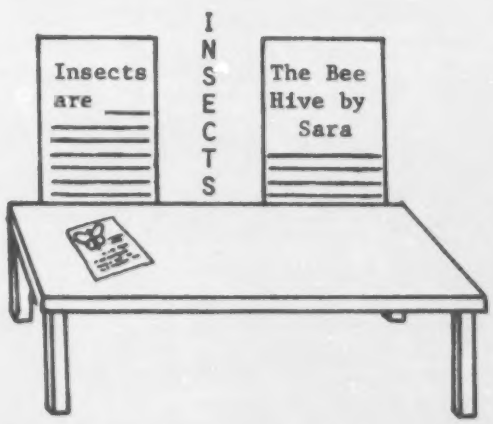




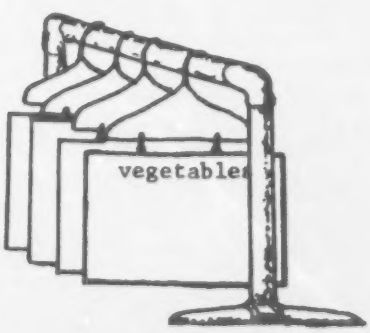
SKILLS BOX



CHART

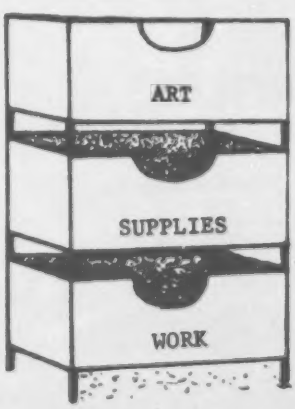


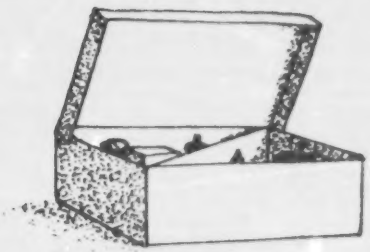
BULLETIN BOARD AND TABLE



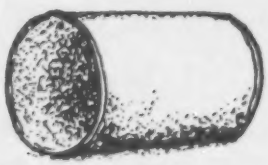
CLOTHES HANGERS

STORAGE BINS

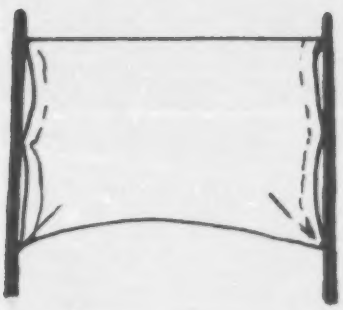




BOX



CAN



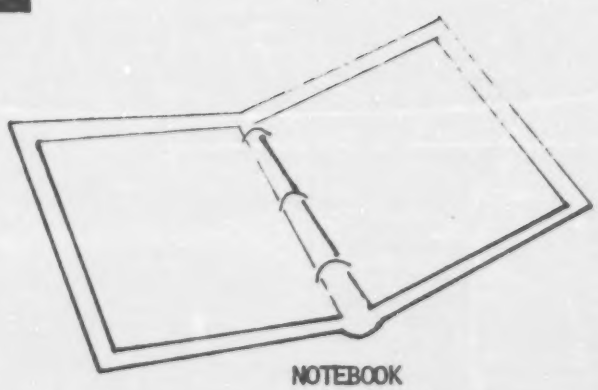
BLANKET FELTBOARD

LISTENING CENTER

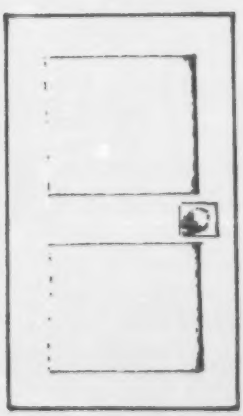
AT THIS CENTER YOU MAY:

1. Choose a record or
2. _____ tape

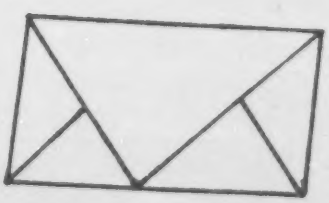
BLACKBOARD



NOTEBOOK



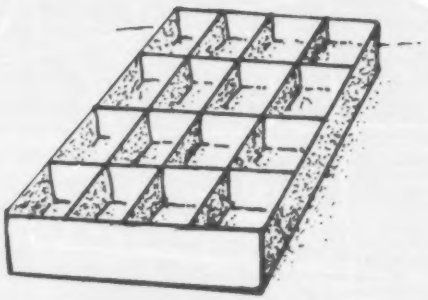
DOOR



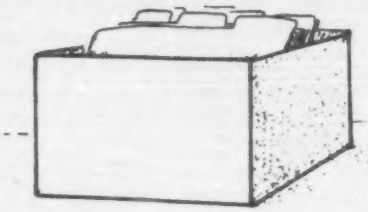
ENVELOPE

RESOURCE TWELVE

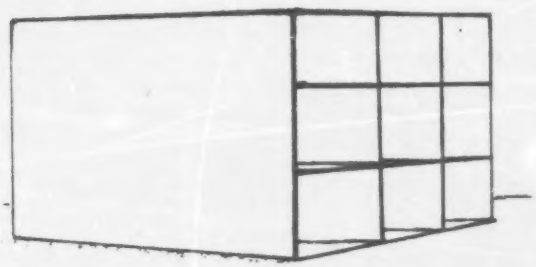
STORAGE TECHNIQUES



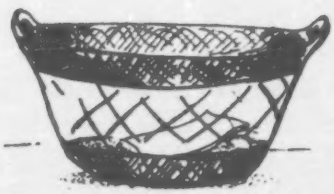
COKE CARTON



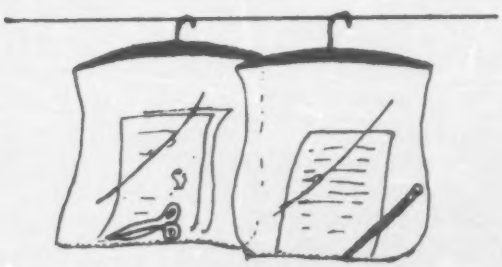
CARDBOARD BOX



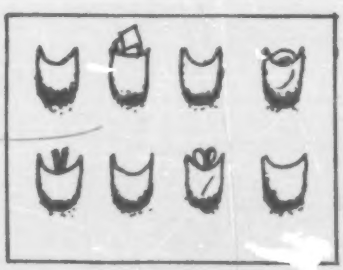
BOX



LAUNDRY BASKET

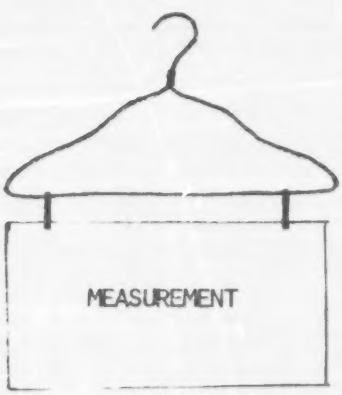


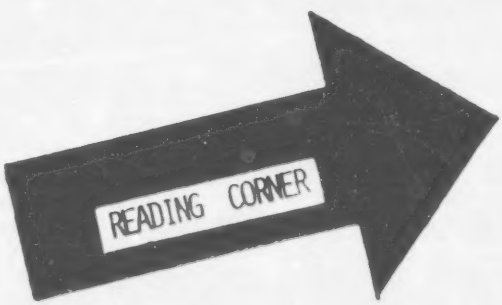
PLASTIC BAGS

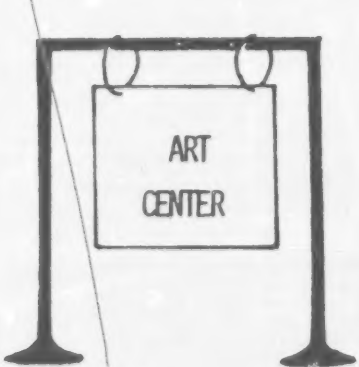


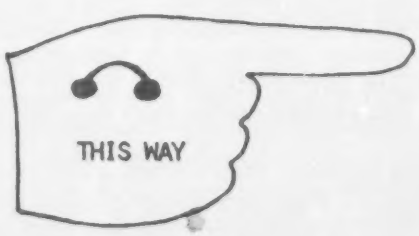
SHOE HOLDER

SIGNS AND LABLES

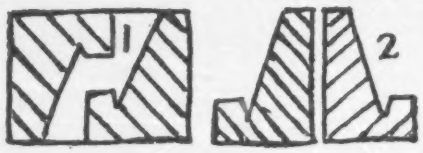
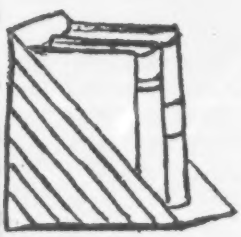
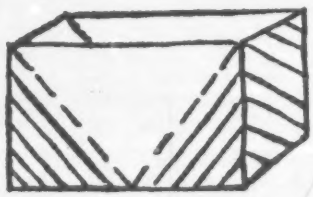
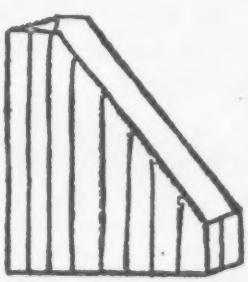
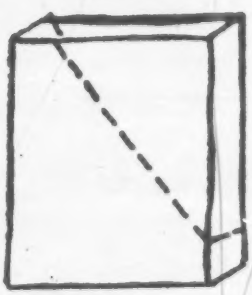


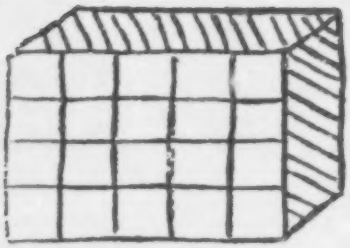
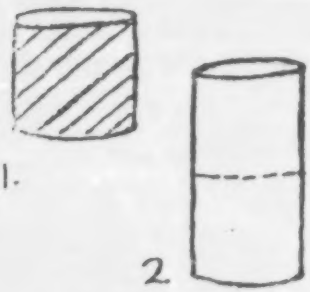
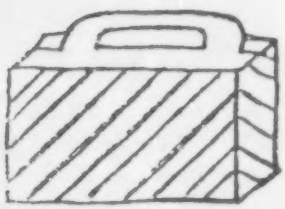


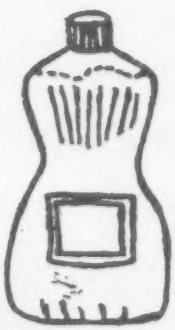




Useful Classroom Equipment

MATERIAL	CONSTRUCTION	USES
STAND	 Cut two patterns from chipboard or cardboard from a grocery box (Fig. 1) and place side by side.(Fig. 2) Hinge the two together with masking tape. Tape sides to prevent wearing.	* holds lightweight books * gives directions * displays charts, pictures * holds worksheets
 BOOKCASE	 Using an ordinary grocery store cardboard box, cut on the diagonal from top outside corners to the center bottom and across as shown in the figure. Cover with decorative paper.	These are ideal because they can easily be transported: books are readily accessible. Use for books in the subject areas, references, etc.
 HOLDER	 Use detergent, cereal, rice, and similarly shaped boxes; Remove top, cut on the diagonal leaving a margin at the top and bottom.	Staple or tape enough for each student in the class and use as "mailboxes" to hold returned papers and notices. Holds workbooks, mail, reference material, maila folders with worksheets and contracts, etc.

MATERIALS	CONSTRUCTION	USES
 "MAILBOX"	Multi-sectioned boxes are available from most liquor stores at no charge. They come with various numbers of sections. Simply cover the box with attractive paper or paint.	* individual "mailboxes" for each student to receive corrected work, notices * receptacle for students' work (folders, subjects, center activities) * holds paper supply, work-sheets
 HOLDER	Cartons are often free of charge from ice cream stores. Simply cover the single cartons.(Figure 1) For a deeper holder (Fig.2), use two cartons; push the bottom out of one and attach to the top of the other with strips of masking tape. Cover with paper, Contact, or paint.	Single cartons could hold: * workbooks * books, pamphlets, resource materials * magazines, newspapers * worksheets * materials and supplies needed for center's activity * wastepaper Double carton could store charts, hold rolls of paper for charts, murals, and other projects.
 HOLDER	A six-pack soft drink carton with the inside sections cut out. (optional) Cover with wrapping paper, wallpaper, decorated butcher paper, Contact, or paint.	Individual cartons for each student hold basic equipment (e.g. pencil, scissors, paste, ruler, eraser) Holds materials and supplies for the activities at the learning center. Contains an entire learning activity for individual or small group use. Number or letter on carton corresponds to same on contract.

MATERIALS	CONSTRUCTION	USES
CARD HOLDER	With glue or a nail, secure a wooden clothespin to a dowl rod which has been cut at an angle. The rod may be nailed to a block of wood or planted in a tuna can full of plaster of paris.	Use the holder at the center for: * directions * information * motivation * self-checking
BOOK RACK	Plywood block serves as the base and two coat and hat hooks hold the displayed material in place. Stain or paint the wood.	Books may be displayed at the library corner or any center for research, information or recreational reading. Rack will also hold tagboard or cardboard for giving the students directions and motivating information.
HOLDER	 Cut away the top portion of a liquid detergent or bleach bottle.	Hold basic supplies at the learning centers or on the students' desks.

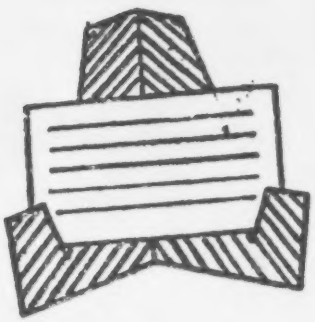
Received during a Right to Read Task Force Meeting. Source Unknown. RESOURCE FIFTEEN

(74)

Methods of Display

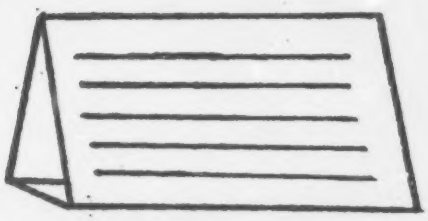
CONSIDERATIONS:

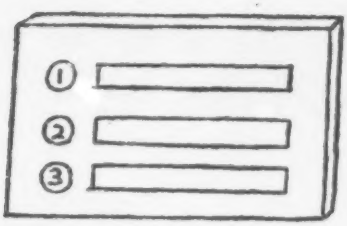
- PRINT OR WRITE NEATLY
- USE VOCABULARY APPROPRIATE TO THE STUDENT'S READING AND COMPREHENSION LEVEL
- KEEP DIRECTIONS SIMPLE, CONCISE



A cardboard stand (see Useful Classroom Equipment) will hold tagboard and construction paper by themselves, or use a piece of cardboard as backing and paper clip or clothespin the information sheet to it.

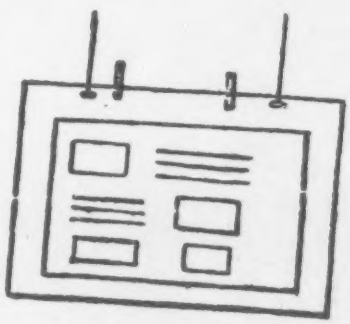
Fold construction paper to form a triangle and a margin for pasting the edges together. Railroad board can also be used; score the fold lines and tape the edges. For both methods, write the information on the display card before assembling.

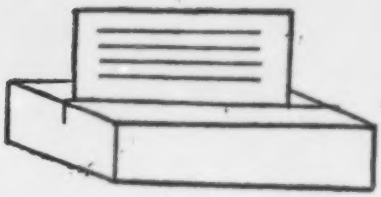




A plywood board is covered with oil cloth or Contact. Charts are displayed with masking tape. The board may be covered with felt or flannel to serve as a felt-board. If painted with "chalkboard paint", information can be written on it or the children use it for various activities.

A clipboard backing hangs from the ceiling, light fixture, or wire secured to the walls. The charts or information, pictures, etc. can be attached with clothespins, or cover the backing with acetate and tape three sides leaving the top open to insert materials. Use both sides if the chart is to hang over a table or cluster of desks.

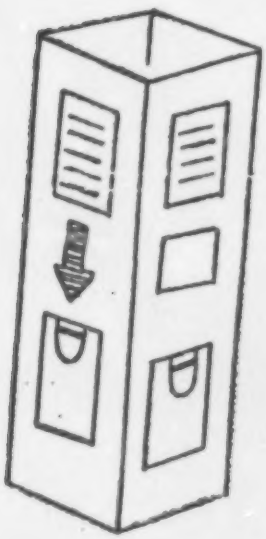


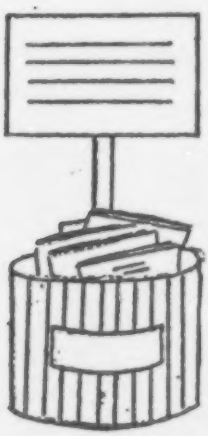


A box, or the lid, is turned upside down and slit across the top to hold a card, tagboard, or construction paper. Egg cartons may be used in the same way.

Clothespin stand (see Useful Classroom Equipment) holds cards, construction paper, envelopes. These are easily made and save space on students' desks or at centers.

Fold construction paper to form a rectangle and a margin for pasting the edges together. Railroad board can also be used; score the fold lines and tape the edges. For larger displays, use chipboard or poster board and score the fold lines. Refrigerator cartons will stand on the floor--they make great display areas and room separaters!





This method of display provides for availability of materials as well as for information. An ice cream carton serves as the base. Attach a dowl rod or lightweight stick to the inside with masking tape. Tagboard or construction paper can also be taped to the wood at the top.

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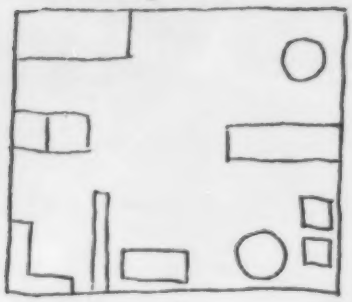
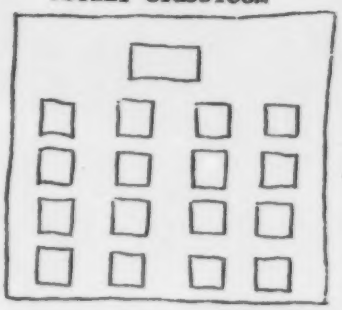
WORKSHEET

Learning Centers



A

Formal Classroom

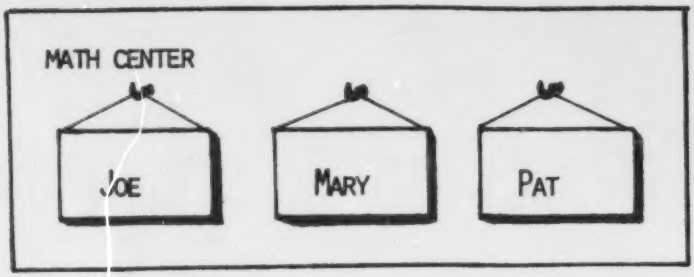


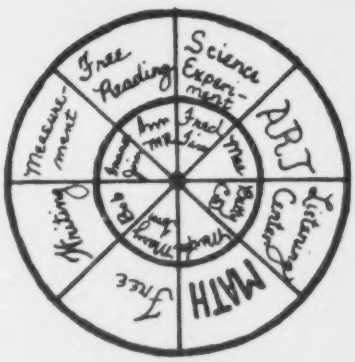
B

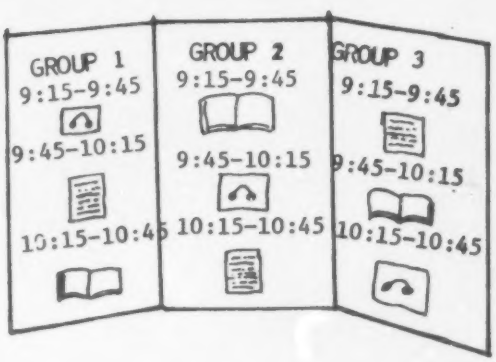
1. teacher as a lecturer ____
2. teacher as a facilitator ____
3. teacher moves about the room ____
4. children move about the room ____
5. chaos ____
6. "Sit quietly--do not talk" ____
7. peer interaction ____
8. grade-getting ____
9. all children finish same assignments ____
10. motivational ____
11. self-learning ____
12. choice ____
13. confusion ____
14. more pupil-teacher interaction ____
15. dependent follower ____
16. homogeneous grouping ____
17. heterogeneous grouping, skill grouping, working as individuals ____
18. multi-level classroom materials ____
19. grade level materials ____
20. no teacher planning ____

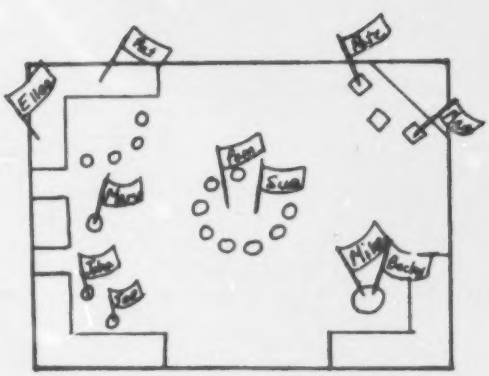
Hunt, Dolly and Donna Lozar, "Classroom Organization and Management." Southwest Area Dade County Schools. Reprinted with permission.

SCHEDULING TECHNIQUES









STAIR-STEP PLAN

First Day

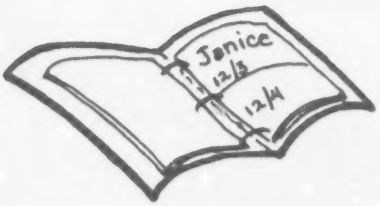
Period	Skills				Skills			
1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5

Second Day

1	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4
2	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3
3	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2
4	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1

Lynch, June, Maxine Cinnamon, Rose Marie Ratts, Virginia McIntyre and Mary Thomason, Manage to Learn, Orange County Schools.

RECORD KEEPING



DONNA, COLOR THE PETAL AS YOU COMPLETE THE TASK AT THE CENTER.

	follows directions	draws inferences	draws conclusions	cause and effect		
JEAN B.						
CAROL B.						
LINDA D.						

DEAR DIARY,

TODAY I_____

_____

_____

_____

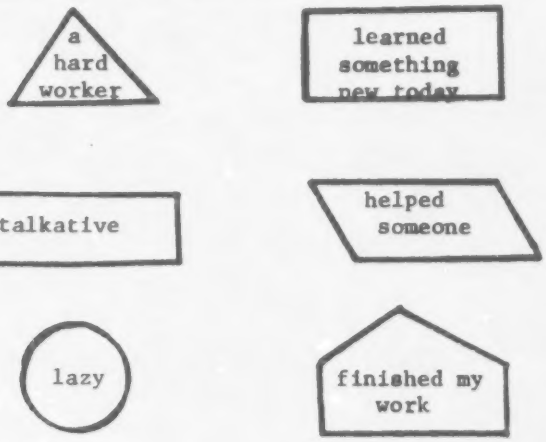
SAM

CENTER	DATE	COMPLETED

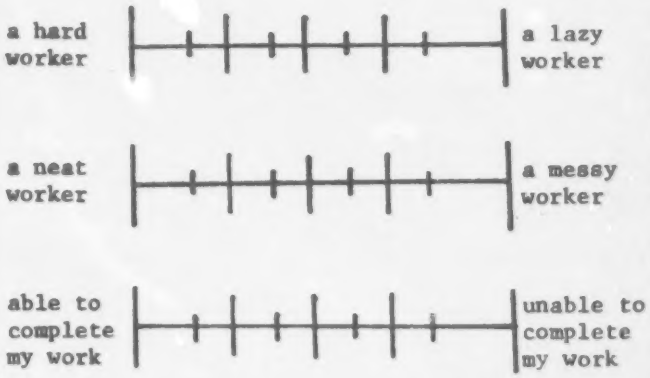
DATE	PRESCRIPTION	COMMENTS

EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

COLOR THE SQUARE WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOU TODAY:



CIRCLE THE STATEMENT WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOU TODAY:



What I did _____

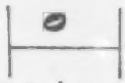
_____

_____

How I felt about it _____

_____

_____



My goals for today are _____

_____

_____

_____

I reached my goals.

YES NO

How Are Learning Experiences Evaluated. . .

...by the teacher?

- SPOT CHECKING
- REVIEW OF STUDENTS' FOLDERS
- METHODS OF RECORD KEEPING

...by the student?

- SHARING PROJECTS OR TELLING ABOUT DISCOVERIES AND/OR EXPERIENCES
- DISCUSSING USE OF TIME, NEEDS, PARTICULAR PROBLEMS
- OFFERING SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
- SYSTEMS OF SELF-CHECKING

Received during a Right to Read Task Force Meeting. Source Unknown.

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Forte, Imogene, and Pangle, Mary Ann. *More Center Stuff for Nooks, Crannies, and Corners.* Nashville, Tennessee: Incentive Publications.

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ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF LEARNING CENTERS

Disadvantages of Learning Centers

1. Some pupils are unable to work independently.
2. Children who have been taught by the learning center approach may find it difficult to adjust to a traditional classroom if the need arises.
3. Record keeping and planning take a lot of work.
4. Some teachers find it hard to find sufficient amounts of time to develop learning centers.
5. The evaluation of learning centers and the children's work is time consuming.

Advantages of Learning Centers

1. The child will choose materials at his own level when he is allowed to select his own work.
2. The child is able to work at his own pace.
3. The child does not become frustrated because of failure.
4. Learning center materials are usually set up so the child can evaluate his own work immediately.
5. Specific skills are taught for each child's needs.
6. No pressure is applied to the child who cannot compete with other children.
7. Poor students are stimulated by their success.
8. Bright children are not held back by slower children.
9. Discipline problems are reduced. The atmosphere of the classroom is more relaxed and happy.
10. Individual differences are accepted and encouraged.
11. Children learn to work cooperatively in groups.
12. Some children will help other children. The child as a teacher helps develop the child's language ability, his ability to reason, and his social responses to other children.,
13. Children learn from watching others do the same activity he has done.
14. Learning center activities will help the child develop individual work habits.

What Can Teachers Expect?

- THAT THERE WILL BE A WORKABLE NOISE LEVEL WHICH WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH PROGRESS
- THAT THE CHILDREN WILL BECOME MORE RESPONSIBLE
- THAT SOME LESSONS WILL BE A RESULT OF SPONTANEOUS ENTHUSIASM
- THAT ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL SKILLS WILL DEVELOP AT A FASTER RATE

Spontaneous communication belongs in every classroom...

...questioning...discussing...helping...

Received during a Right to Read Task Force Meeting.
(89)

RESOURCE TWENTY-FIVE

INTRODUCTION

This portion of the packet deals with the classroom climate. It's intent is to give suggestions as to how a teacher can create a positive classroom environment. The following are the major questions to be addressed to help one attain a positive climate:

QUESTION ONE:

How does one create a positive climate in the classroom?

QUESTION TWO:

What should a teacher do about inappropriate behavior?

Before discussing the management of behavior, one must know what behavior is. Behavior as it is used in this packet means "anything a person does, says, or thinks that can be observed directly or indirectly." Some examples of behavior are: standing up, waving good-bye, smiling, etc.

It is not the teacher's goal, then, merely to get the students to behave, but to have them behave in an appropriate manner. But what is appropriate behavior? Ideas about what is appropriate may differ from individual to individual. For example, in some classes walking around the classroom without the teacher's permission is considered inappropriate, while in another teacher's class it is most appropriate for students to get up and walk around at will. The individual teacher must decide what behavior is appropriate.

One principle of behavior a teacher should be aware of is that *behavior is learned.* Students learn to do things which fulfill their needs as they see them. Thus, behavior which obtains a desired response will continue while a behavior which does not achieve a desired response will generally desist. Thus, the next principle of behavior is as follows: *Behavior which is rewarded tends to continue, while that which is unrewarded will tend to stop.* Rewarded here means that the desired response is obtained.

Here perhaps a word should be said about the difference between a reward and a bribe. A reward is not the same thing as a bribe but rather the student is able to earn a pleasant experience for cooperating. Rewards help provide the necessary feedback for small gains that individuals make on the tasks that are the most difficult for them.

Bribery occurs when a child threatens inappropriate behavior unless he is paid off.

These are the principles of behavior which will form the basis for managing classroom behavior. Students can learn how to behave in an appropriate manner when they are given positive reinforcement.

STRATEGY: *In the way of needs assessment, have the participants describe on an index card one of their discipline problems to which they would like a solution. These should give the workshop leader some insight into the participants' needs and problems. These index cards can be used at the end of the session as situations in which the participants can role play both the problem and its solution(s). Here it is most important that the solutions emphasize the positive.*

STRATEGY: *To stimulate the participants thinking about classroom climate, have them brainstorm a description of the worst possible climate they can imagine. Record their responses on the chalkboard, chartpaper, or a transparency. The participants should groan at the thought of trying to teach in this type of atmosphere. The point is, "How can this type of atmosphere be avoided?" which is the purpose of the workshop.*

QUESTION ONE:

How does one create a positive climate in the classroom?

The first step in creating a positive classroom climate is for the teacher to pinpoint the behaviors to be reinforced or eliminated. The term pinpointing here means to identify exact behavior. For example, if honesty is the desirable behavior, more specific behaviors which would indicate that a student is honest can be pinpointed, such as the following: a student who finds a nickel returns it; a student claims responsibility for spilling water. Pinpointing will help the teacher know exactly what behaviors should be reinforced.

After the desired behavior has been poinpointed, the next step is to set the rules. Students, no matter what their age, should be involved in formulating the rules. If the students agree upon a rule it should be accepted and tried out by the group. Students are much more likely to follow the rules they set up; besides, rule setting gives them practice in the democratic process. It should be mentioned that this rule setting process is not intended to exclude the teacher. Rather, the teacher is one of the group and as such a member should participate in the rule-making decisions.

The teacher should attempt to guide the students in selecting rules which have a general application. This will also help limit the number of rules. Too many rules are as ineffective as no rules at all. One should remember that rules stated in a positive way obtain the same result without the "don'ts" and "no's". For example, "Please walk in the hall" has the same or more effect than "Do not run in the hall." Both teachers and students will feel better about the positive atmosphere this type of rules will help initiate. Finally, remember rules are only guidelines so if they do not work, they can be changed.

Now that the desired behavior has been pinpointed and the rules drawn up, it is the teacher's responsibility to accent the positive. The teacher should give attention to those behaviors which facilitate learning and ignore those behaviors which are incompatible with the behaviors the teacher wishes to increase.

The article included in the packet as RESOURCE TWO entitled "Catch the Child Being Good" from Clifford and Charles Madsen's book, *Teaching Discipline: A Positive Approach for Educational Development*, affords an excellent summary of how a teacher can accentuate the positive within the classroom. One of the points made in this excerpt is that behaviors which interfere with learning or teaching should be

ignored unless they threaten the safety of others. However, ignoring will not work if there is not an abundance of praise for appropriate behavior.

To make approval responses meaningful to the students, the teacher must vary her responses. For example, if the word "nice" is used to describe every behavior the teacher wants to reinforce, it will soon lose its effectiveness. In RESOURCE TWO, taken from the same source as Resource One, there is a list of approval responses. The following are some examples of these responses:

WORDS: Swell; splendid; positively, fabulous

SENTENCES: "That's clever." "I'm pleased." "You're doing fine."

RELATIONSHIPS: "Nice things happen to nice children."
"You catch on very quickly."

WRITTEN WORDS OR SYMBOLS: Bravo! ☺ 100% + WOW!

EXPRESSIONS:

Facial: smiling, winking, whistling

Bodily: signaling O.K.; thumbs up, clapping hands

NEARNESS: Eating with the students, interacting with class at recess

TOUCHING: Ruffling hair, patting back, quick squeeze

ACTIVITIES AND PRIVELEGES:

Individual: leading the student group; reading a story; grading papers

Social: Movies, playing records, taking a field trip

Awards: citations, medals, books

These are but a few of the responses listed in RESOURCE TWO. They are listed above to illustrate how a teacher can vary approval responses.

RESOURCE THREE offers four types of recognition techniques that work: awards, free time passes, rental priveleges, and bonus points. The first type mentioned, the award, may be given for behavior, achievement, a person's actions toward another human being or just for doing something right.

The second recognition technique mentioned in RESOURCE THREE is the free time pass. This is usually in the form of certificates awarded to students which give them a rest from their work. This type of award not only provides positive reinforcement of a given behavior, but it offers the students a time for peer interaction or a time to be alone and do what they want to do.

Still another type of reward which can be offered students is bonus points. In this system, the student earns points for appropriate behavior. These points give students the opportunity to buy things or activities which they enjoy. The student can save them or spend them at will for activities or things designated by the teacher. Here again there must be things or activities of interest to all students if they are to motivate appropriate behaviors.

Students can also do specific activities in exchange for the opportunity to rent something. For example, a student may have to do the following in order to rent some comic books for two days:

1. *Let a friend ask you the multiplication tables.*
2. *Read a story to a friend.*
3. *Earn 75 bonus points.*
4. *Finish all your homework for one week.*
5.
6.
7.

etc.

Materials used for rental purposes must be durable so that they can be taken home. They should also reflect the interests of the students

At first, the teacher who is giving approval responses or rewards will feel as though the responses sound phony. However, after a bit of practice, approval responses will become second nature to the teacher. Teachers will also begin to feel much better about their positive activities in the classroom.

Another factor which cannot be overemphasized is that the approval response or reward must fit the student if it is to be effective. Giving the shy student who hates to be the center of attention an opportunity for show and tell in front of the entire class as a reward would certainly not entice the student to repeat the behavior.

Any new behavior exhibited by an individual must be rewarded or given some sign of approval immediately. This will link the behavior to a positive feeling in the student and thereby make the student much more prone to repeating the desired behavior.

Hopefully, if teachers pinpoint the behaviors they expect of students, set the rules with the help of the students and accentuate the positive, the classroom atmosphere will become a more positive one. But as most teachers know, that would be too simple solution. There will still be students who at times exhibit inappropriate behavior.

STRATEGY: RESOURCE TWO *"Catch the child being good," can be used as a handout. However, it is suggested that this handout be distributed at the end of the workshop as a summary sheet.*

STRATEGY: *Use* RESOURCE THREE *"Approval Responses," as a handout or give the participants the general category of responses, such as "Words Spoken: Approval" and have them brainstorm possible responses. This could be made into a handout to be shared later.*

STRATEGY: *Use* RESOURCE ONE, *" Rules for Rule Setting," as a transparency. Discuss each point, or have the participants write their own.*

STRATEGY: *During the workshop, the consultant could model the teacher's behaviors necessary to create a positive climate.*

QUESTION TWO:

What should the teacher do about inappropriate behavior?

Most inappropriate behavior should be ignored. A general rule to follow is that if a behavior is not something that is seriously disrupting the class or physically hurting the student, others, or property, it should probably be ignored. Instances like getting out of one's seat for inappropriate reasons should be ignored. Verbal behaviors like talking at inappropriate times, although somewhat disruptive, should be ignored. These are but a few examples of behavior which can be ignored by the teacher. It should be noted that ignoring inappropriate behavior may cause it to increase as the students test the system. However, if the teacher keeps accentuating good behavior no matter how small and ignoring the inappropriate behavior no matter how disruptive, the students should eventually respond. The teacher must be patient and consistent if this system is to work.

If a behavior cannot be ignored because it may do someone or something harm, a teacher may wish to try one of the following:

* allow the student to cool down while isolated from the situation
* withdraw priveleges
* withdraw approval
* submit the student to a higher authority
* hold a parent-teacher-child conference with an uninvolved mediator

RESOURCE FIVE lists some discipline techniques that do not work. Distraught teachers sometimes attempt disciplinary action that does more harm than good. Their desperation measures may work for the moment, but the long-range effects may be worse than the misbehavior itself. The following are examples of techniques that do not work: threats, argument, confession, humiliation, extra schoolwork, sarcasm, comparison, challenges, and mass punishment.

Punishment often gives students the end they were after, which is attention. Thus, if it is attention the students are after, it is just as easily given by positive reinforcement. Punishment may also produce intense fears and anxieties in students which may last a lifetime. When students receive frequent punishment and see no course of action that will enable them to escape punishment, a foundation is laid for later neurotic behavior. Some students tend to resist punishment by fighting back, by actively escaping or by withdrawing into passive apathy. Or the student will attempt to avoid

the punisher whenever possible. Punishment is therefore not a good way to get students to behave in an appropriate manner.

STRATEGY: *Have participants list three discipline techniques which they have found unsuccessful. Compile these into one list. Discuss why they do not work. Following the discussion,* **RESOURCE FIVE**, *"Some Discipline Techniques That Don't Work," can be used as a handout.*

STRATEGY: *Divide the participants into small groups and have them role play the discipline problems they wrote down in the beginning of the workshop. Ask the audience for solutions.*

STRATEGY: *Have a discipline problem exchange. Participants write down one problem they would like a solution to. Exchange problems and write a solution.*

STRATEGY: *Share* **RESOURCE SIX**, *"Bibliography" with the group.*

STRATEGY: *Use* **RESOURCE SEVEN**, *"Froghood" to either introduce or conclude the session on classroom climate.*

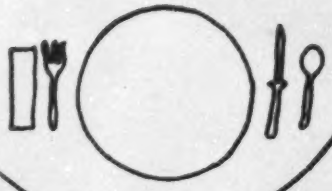
STRATEGY: *Using* **RESOURCE EIGHT** *as a guide model the giving of awards by distributing buttons to the participants.*

A
Polite
Third
Grader

I
Have Used
My Time
Wisely
Today

A
Very Neat
Writer!

A
Good Eater!



A
Good
Listener

A
Very Hard
Worker!

I
Had a
Good Day

DY–NO MITE

Star
Student
!!!

You're
!!! G-r-r-reat!

F**
Ou'

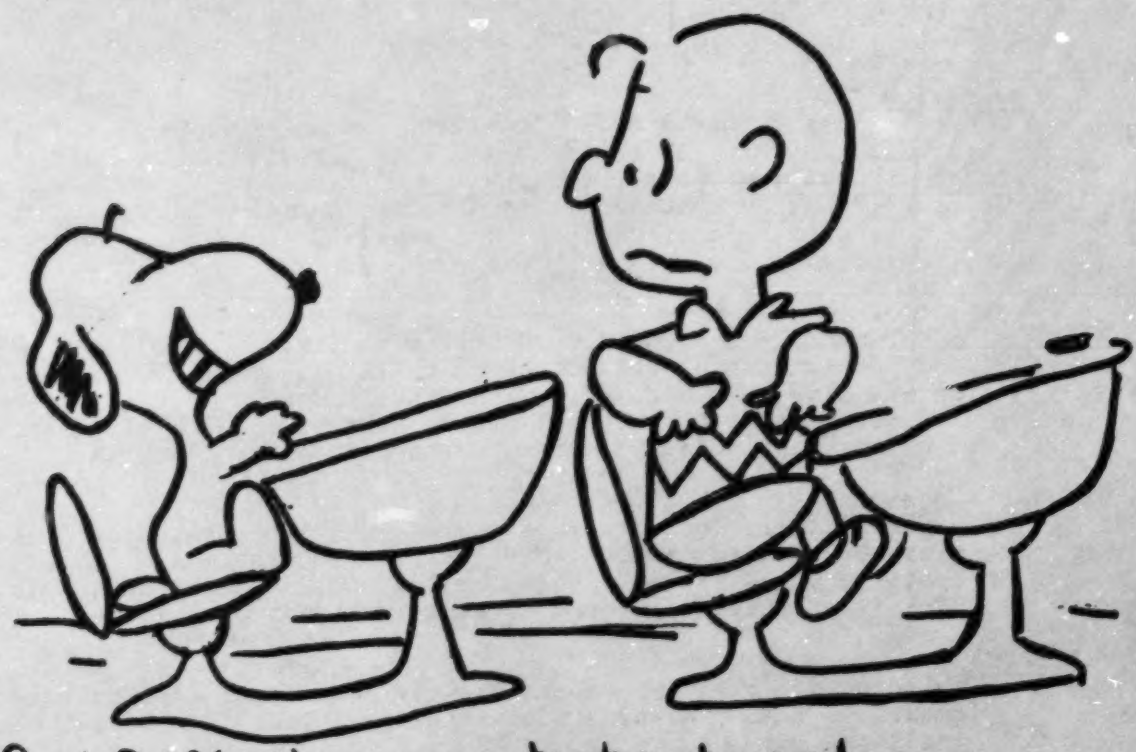
(98)

RESOURCE SIX

RULES FOR RULE SETTING

1. INVOLVE THE STUDENTS.
2. ACCEPT AND TRY OUT THE RULES THE PUPILS AGREE UPON.
3. AS A MEMBER OF THE GROUP THE TEACHER PARTICIPATES IN THE RULE MAKING DECISIONS.
4. RULES ARE ONLY GUIDELINES SO IF THEY DON'T WORK THEY CAN BE CHANGED.
5. LIMIT THE NUMBER OF RULES.
6. TRY TO GUIDE THE STUDENTS IN SELECTING RULES WITH GENERAL APPLICATION.
7. STATE THE RULES IN A POSITIVE WAY.
8. MAKE SURE THE RULES ARE UNDERSTOOD.
9. KEEP THE RULES SHORT AND TO THE POINT.
10. POST THE RULES IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE AND REVIEW THEM REGULARLY.
11. LET STUDENTS KNOW WHEN DIFFERENT RULES APPLY (PLAY-WORK).

Pages 100 to 106 were removed due to copyright restriction. They contained "Catch the Child Being Good" and "Approval Responses" from Teaching Discipline: A Positive Approach for Educational Development. Expanded Second Edition, by Charles H. Madsen and Clifford K. Madsen (Allyn and Bacon: 1974).



Good Grief! How can my teacher be positive with you here !!

SOME DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES THAT DON'T WORK

Distraught teachers sometimes try disciplinary action that does more harm than good. Their desperation measures may work for the moment (although they can't even count on that), but the long-range effects are often greater misbehavior. For example:

THREATS

Using idle threats as a disciplinary measure is a waste of time, says University of Oregon's School Study Council in its publication, "Discipline Problems and Policies as They Relate to the Classroom Teacher." What will you do if the student takes up your challenge? If you aren't prepared to carry out the threat, your position is weakened.

ARGUMENT

Discussions that degenerate into teacher-pupil arguments only cause ill feeling on both sides. Nobody wins an argument, so keep your cool. Respond to a student's arguments with "Why do you feel this way?" or "Let's ask the class what they think about this" rather than with flat, argumentative statements of your own.

CONFESSION

Don't insist that a child "confess" his wrongdoings. He'll usually deny it, thus adding a lie to his feeling of guilt. Is it always necessary to know who misbehaved? Chances are the teacher has an idea who it is already, and the "confession" is a degrading kind of punishment rather than a sincere desire for information.

HUMILIATION

Never humiliate a child by a public reprimand. This will not only embitter him, but sometimes enlist the rest of the class on his side, against you. Great psychological injury can be inflicted on a child by belittling, ridiculing, or humiliating a child, particularly in the presence of other children.

EXTRA SCHOOLWORK

Never assign schoolwork as a punishment. The teacher who keeps misbehavers after school to do arithmetic problems or to write spelling words is labeling schoolwork as a painful thing, so unpleasant that it is used to punish wrongdoing.

SARCASM

Children don't always understand the meaning of a sarcastic remark, but they always understand its intent: to hurt their feelings.

COMPARISON

"Why can't you be as well behaved as your sister?" "You're the noisiest child in this room!" Attempts to improve behavior by comparing a child with others rarely work. They make the child resent or even hate the "better behaved" others. They may even inspire him to new heights of misbehavior, to show he doesn't care.

CHALLENGES

Don't challenge youngsters to misbehave. When you say "The next person I catch throwing spitballs will have to stay after school" you are challenging them to do it without being caught. Many children with a spark of spirit will try, and risk punishment, just for the adventure of it. It is better to say, "Will those who have been throwing spitballs please stay a few minutes after school and pick them up? We don't want to leave the room in a mess."

MASS PUNISHMENT

Be fair. Don't punish the entire class for one child's misbehavior. It is like punishing an entire town for one person's crime.

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